

**HABERMAS,
FROM SOCIETY TO FAMILY:
COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION, SOLIDARITY AND EMANCIPATION**

A Thesis
Submitted to the College of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Department of Sociology
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

By
Phillip B. Lee

PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Postgraduate degree from the University of Saskatchewan, I agree that the libraries of this university may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying of this thesis in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor who supervised my thesis work or, in his absence, by the head of the department or the dean of the college in which my thesis work was done. It is understood that any copying, publication, or use of this thesis or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to the University of Saskatchewan in any scholarly use which may be made of any material in my thesis.

Requests for permission to copy or to make other use of material in this thesis in whole or part should be addressed to:

Head of the Department of Sociology
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 5A5

DEDICATION

To Megan, my love, my friend, my wife
To Alice, my beloved mother: in memory

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In light of Merleau-Ponty's observation that "because we are in the world, we are condemned to meaning," theory is profoundly practical and always necessary if we are to get up in the morning with meaning, and stand up in our lives with compassion against human exploitation. When we seek to engage social and cultural life with imagination and with justice, we serve each other and our world most humanly. Theory allows us, in the midst of a daily distracting din, to distance ourselves, to decentre, to ask how and why about what we take for granted in order to recognize, to re-engage, and to be faithful to the call of "the extraordinary within the ordinary" (Ricoeur).

John Thompson, Sociology, University of Saskatchewan

I have been privileged throughout my academic studies, both as an undergraduate and graduate student, to have been associated with and influenced by several great teachers within Sociology. Their enthusiasm, commitment, guidance, friendship and mentorship have enabled me to seek the best in and of myself and to vigorously pursue my questions, to search for meaning. I stand on their shoulders, especially those mentioned below.

In regards to my Ph.D. dissertation, I am deeply indebted to my advisor, John Thompson (Sociology), who has been a constant source of encouragement, advice and knowledge. His love of learning and teaching and his steadfast faith have been, and continue to be, inspirational. Importantly, all of my advisory committee members have provided me with a collegial learning environment for exploring and testing ideas, for making sense of my questions. They helped quiet the daily din. My sincere gratitude and profound respect are extended to Ron Griffin (Sociology), David Hay (Sociology), Robert Regnier (Educational Foundations), all of the University of Saskatchewan, and to the external examiner, James Kelly (Sociology and Anthropology), Fordham University. To all of you, your questions, comments and advice reflect your wisdom: as teachers, as mentors, and as fellow learners.

My sincere thanks is extended to the administrative and office staff of the Sociology Department, Saint Thomas More College, and the College of Graduate Studies for helping to resolve problems and to deal with the day-to-day requirements

involved in successfully completing my graduate studies. To the University of Saskatchewan, thank you for the University Graduate Scholarship. And to the Sociology Departments within Saint Thomas More College and the University, thank you for the many years of teaching responsibilities. Finally, I express my deepest appreciation and love to my wife, my best friend, for your ongoing encouragement and support, and our always engaging conversations.

ABSTRACT

Given Sociology's central concern with social interaction, the complexity, pace and intensity of social modernization creates a tremendous theoretical burden for investigating the modern social dynamic. Furthermore, three core themes are foundational to a sociological perspective concerned with intersubjectivity: social action, social order and social change. In this research, a Habermasian discursive approach to the study of the modern social dynamic holds significant potential for examining and critiquing Sociology's grounding issues or themes. My research presents the best case for using a Habermasian approach to understanding and theorizing family within contemporary pluralistic societies. By design, I did not utilize or focus upon the extensive secondary literature critical of Habermas' thought and writing. Accordingly, Habermas' social philosophy provides the theoretical framework for addressing three sociological problems: understanding the communicative basis of the social dynamic, interconnecting family with larger social formations, and studying Canadian families empirically.

In order to address these problems, a communicative sociological perspective is used to analyze each of Sociology's three focal themes: the discursive interlinking of social interaction through consensus formation (Chapter Two); the moral and legal nature of a communicatively produced solidarity for creating and maintaining social order (Chapter Three); and the communicative foundation of social change and emancipation within both private and public spheres of social life (Chapter Four). Prima facie evidence was found for the relevance of a Habermasian perspective through an empirical analysis of concordant familial relationships within Canada using the General Social Survey. Logistic regression reveals a distinct but complex profile of Canadian married couples who engage in democratic discourse as they construct a common family life-project together.

Habermas' theory of communicative action and discourse theory reconstruct the normative basis for establishing and maintaining peaceful, cooperative and

consensual relationships with both proximal and distal others. Through the use of everyday language to reach understanding and agreement within our communicative sociations with others, we have the capacity to establish egalitarian forms of family life and friendly forms of global coexistence. Habermas' social philosophy provides a communicative lens through which to better understand, assess and address the conditions, problems and potentials of modern social life, whether at the level of family or global society. On the one hand, the discursive nature of communicative sociation reveals the fertile but fragile nature of the internal connection between Sociology's focal themes, between solidarity and justice, between ethical and moral life, between social and functional integration, between morality and law, and between family and system. On the other hand, our communicative practices have a productive force capable of establishing, reproducing and renegotiating new ways of accomplishing goals and meeting needs, new solidarities and responsibilities, and new motivations and attitudes.

According to a Habermasian approach to the sociological perspective, democratic discourse enables the voice of the other to be heard, respected, and considered. A communicative sociological approach therefore points to the relational structures which underlie our action coordinating practices. These relational structures emphasize the importance of a democratic relational dynamic, engendered by solidarity and justice, which can be characterized as an 'intact' intersubjectivity. Democratic discourse therefore enables the consensual coordination of social interaction(s) with an other or others ethically and morally, within family and society, even under the pervasive and intensive constraints of a globalized market economy in need of effective moral-political governance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES.....	xi

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION: FOLLOWING HABERMAS FROM SOCIETY TO FAMILY

1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Habermas and Social Interaction.....	2
1.3 Thesis.....	5
1.4 Family.....	6
1.5 The Social Dynamic.....	7
1.6 Conclusion.....	9

CHAPTER TWO HABERMAS AND THE INDIVIDUAL-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION

2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Habermas' Social Philosophy.....	12
2.3 Habermas' Critical Social Theory.....	16
2.3.1 Introduction.....	16
2.3.2 Social Evolution.....	19
2.3.3 Observations.....	25
2.3.4 Lifeworld-System Interchange.....	30
2.3.4.1 Introduction.....	30
2.3.4.2 Societal Integration.....	35
2.3.4.3 Social Integration.....	38

2.3.4.4 Functional Integration.....	41
2.3.4.5 Comments.....	43
2.3.4.6 The Interchange.....	46
2.3.5 Communicative Action.....	54
2.3.5.1 Introduction.....	54
2.3.5.2 Observations.....	57
2.3.5.3 Communicative Action and Strategic Action.....	62
2.3.5.3.1 Introduction.....	62
2.3.5.3.2 Strategic Action.....	63
2.3.5.3.3 Communicative Action.....	66
2.3.5.3.4 Presuppositions.....	74
2.3.5.3.5 Lifeworld.....	82
2.3.5.4 Comments.....	92
2.3.6 Example.....	94
2.4 Conclusion.....	104

CHAPTER THREE HABERMAS AND SOCIAL ORDER: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION AND SOLIDARITY

3.1 Introduction.....	110
3.2 Qualifications.....	115
3.3 Discourse Ethics.....	118
3.3.1 Introduction.....	118
3.3.2. Impartialness.....	120
3.3.2.1 A Moral Point of View.....	120
3.3.2.2 Practical Discourse.....	125
3.3.2.3 Secularized Morality and Law.....	128
3.3.2.4 Relational Structures.....	138
3.3.2.5 Justice and Solidarity.....	139
3.3.2.6 Justification and Application.....	140
3.3.2.7 Moral Learning.....	141
3.3.2.8 Comments.....	144

3.3.3. Embeddedness.....	145
3.3.3.1 Introduction.....	145
3.3.3.2 The Common Core of Morality.....	148
3.3.3.3 Moral Life and Ethical Life.....	151
3.3.3.4 Norms and Values.....	152
3.3.3.5 Public Sphere and Private Sphere.....	155
3.3.3.6 Three Types of Discourse.....	158
3.3.3.7 Opinion- and Will-Formation.....	161
3.3.3.8 Liberal Political Culture.....	163
3.3.3.9 Comments.....	165
3.3.4. Openness.....	166
3.3.4.1 Introduction.....	166
3.3.4.2 Moral Learning Processes.....	168
3.3.4.3 Moral Order and Legal Order.....	169
3.3.4.3.1. Introduction.....	169
3.3.4.3.2. Moral Order.....	172
3.3.4.3.3. Legal Order.....	175
3.3.4.4 Constitutional Democracy.....	176
3.3.4.5 Radical Democracy.....	180
3.3.4.6 Comments.....	184
3.4 Conclusion.....	186

CHAPTER FOUR HABERMAS AND SOCIAL CHANGE: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION, SOLIDARITY AND EMANCIPATION

4.1 Introduction.....	191
4.2 Social Change.....	194
4.2.1 Introduction.....	194
4.2.2 Lifeworld Rationalization.....	194
4.2.3 Communicative Sociation.....	198
4.2.4 Private Sphere and Public Sphere.....	202
4.2.5 Solidarity.....	204

4.2.6 Comments.....	222
4.3 Social Change and Family.....	224
4.3.1 Introduction.....	224
4.3.2 Family History.....	224
4.3.3 The Promise and the Paradox of Emancipation.....	227
4.3.4 Communication and Family.....	232
4.3.5 Comments.....	243
4.4 Canadian Families: Some Empirical Observations.....	248
4.4.1 Introduction.....	248
4.4.2 Theoretical Considerations.....	251
4.4.3 Methodology.....	258
4.4.4 Data Analysis.....	263
4.4.5 Discussion.....	264
4.4.6 Comments.....	267
4.5 Conclusion.....	271
CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION AND THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE	
5.1 Introduction.....	280
5.2 A Sociological Perspective.....	280
5.2.1 Overview.....	280
5.2.2 Comments.....	281
5.2.3 Chapter Summaries.....	284
5.2.3.1 Chapter Two.....	284
5.2.3.2 Chapter Three.....	287
5.2.3.3 Chapter Four.....	297
5.3 Observations.....	306
5.4 Concluding Thoughts.....	314
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	322

LIST OF FIGURES

1.1 The Social Dynamic: Social Action, Social Order, and Social Change.....	8
2.1 Habermas' Theoretical Architectonics.....	17
2.2 Habermas' Theory of Social Evolution.....	20
2.3 Lifeworld Spheres, Institutional Cores, Structural Components and Resources.....	32
2.4 The Lifeworld-System Interchange and Four Institutionalized Roles.....	33
2.5 Lifeworld-System Interchange: System Perspective.....	48
2.6 Lifeworld-System Interchange and Three Basic Resources.....	52
2.7 Communicative Action and Validity Claims.....	68
2.8 Types of Action, Modes of Language Use and Actoral Attitudes.....	71
3.1 Solidarity, Communicative Power and the Lifeworld-System Interchange.....	116
4.1 Levels of Solidarity.....	216

LIST OF TABLES

4.1 Factor Loadings for Varimax Orthogonal Nine Factor Solution With Chronbach's Alpha.....	260
4.2 Intercorrelations For Concordant Relationship and Predictor Variables.....	261
4.3 Logistic Regression Predicting Concordant Relationships.....	266

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: FOLLOWING HABERMAS FROM SOCIETY TO FAMILY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Social interaction, in all of its changing contours, contexts and complexity, from global society to family, has been a central focus of Sociology. However, given the individuation of life-styles and life-projects, given the pluralism of life-forms, given the shared needs, risks and problems of living in a globalized social world, and given the convolution and imbrication of social space and social time, Sociology bears an enormous theoretical burden. The pace, intensity and abstractive nature of social modernization only amplify the burden on social theory.

Several axiomatic questions have traditionally oriented the sociological analysis of social interaction. How can social theory account for elemental face-to-face relationships, for complex (global) social formations, and for their interconnection(s)? Further, how can sociological theory explain social order? Or, how can it explain social change? How are just forms of social life – such as well-ordered societies and democratic family relationships – possible? These questions remain foundational, and are guiding themes (e.g., action, order, change) in this research document.

Since interaction is Sociology's primary focus, we should clarify what we mean when we say we are social beings. The suppositions proffered here are, not surprisingly, pragmatic and quotidian. First, in modern societies, being social involves the capacity, motivation and competence for establishing and maintaining cooperative relationships, including the peaceful resolution of conflicts, with both proximal and distal others. Second, reasoned actions require autonomous decision

making by competent participants who are morally perceptive and responsive. Thus, third, as rational beings, our interactions are, at root, communicatively oriented. Concordant relationships with others require continued, effective and reliable communicative practices.

Fourth, furthermore, as social beings, we are historically embedded within variegated life-forms, cultural traditions, and religious backgrounds. In multicultural societies, let alone in global society where interaction boundaries are dissolving, different values, norms and preferences must be coordinated discursively. And, fifth, the challenge of communicatively addressing new contingencies and new experiences fosters a discursive learning process through which social change occurs. In order to meet our everyday needs, to coordinate our social lives and to solve our local and global problems we must learn to cooperate discursively. In other words, a communicative social dynamic interweaves Sociology's core questions and grounds its guiding suppositions. One very promising approach to addressing Sociology's founding questions, an approach which begins with the communicative social dynamic, is the critical social theory of Jurgen Habermas.

1.2 HABERMAS AND SOCIAL INTERACTION

According to Jurgen Habermas, social theory should sensitize us to the ambivalent developments (1994b:116; 2002b:87; unless indicated otherwise, all references in this document are from Habermas' oeuvre), to the emancipatory and oppressive tendencies, which characterize contemporary, post-industrial social life. For Habermas, sensitization should free us from cultural embeddedness, pragmatic bewilderment and motivational obdurateness. Through his theory of communicative action and discourse theory, Habermas reconstructs the normative basis for living together peacefully, cooperatively and consensually.

Habermas' social philosophy offers a communicative lens through which to better understand and assess the conditions, problems and potentials confronting us at the beginning of a new millennium. His social theory points toward an "intact intersubjectivity" (1992b:145), a discursive relational dynamic characterized by solidarity and justice, through which legitimate moral practical solutions to everyday

(social) problems are possible. Within Habermas' critical social theory, the reciprocity and symmetry necessary for everyday democratic forms of communicative sociation, within family or global society, reflect an emancipatory potential within contemporary forms of life.

Habermas maintains that emancipated forms of life, or, more practically, friendly forms of coexistence, are only possible through communicative practices which establish solidary and just social relations, at the same time. If by emancipated social life-conditions we are referring to truth, justice and freedom, and if these conditions are to be achieved non-coercively, then solutions to either local or global needs and problems must be sought procedurally. Democratic procedure allows for opinion (focused discussion) and will-formation (decision) through rational (reasoned) and inclusive (universal) discourse (2005:13). The egalitarian universalism – universal inclusivity and equal consideration – underlying democratic forms of discourse tends to produce outcomes which are understood by participants as legitimate and binding. Yet, procedurally derived outcomes are fallible. They can be subject to revision or rejection as new forms of knowledge, new social problems, and new needs and preferences arise. Democratic communicative sociation is the cornerstone of Habermas' theoretical architectonics, and therefore of his analysis of social modernization.

Social modernization also means that the discursive pursuit of the good (ethical) life and the just (moral) life have assumed different normative weights in regards to social integration within contemporary democratic political orders. While conflicts are resolved discursively (e.g., reasoned argumentation) at both levels, normative needs within modern political orders accord empirical priority to the moral point of view. Because impartiality can be displaced by ethical interests and concerns, political justice therefore must favor the moral perspective (2005:13). The legitimacy and stability of modern multicultural social orders depend upon egalitarian universalism.

While forms of power, oppression and violence indelibly mark our societies and constrain our moral sensibilities, Habermas believes “egalitarian interpersonal

relations” are possible (2003b:63). He argues that morality and law provide a normative authority for everyday life-practices and experiences (2003b:45-46). The inclusive-universal nature of normative validity derived from discursive practices of consensus formation reflects a “nonassimilative, noncoercive intersubjective communality”, a communality which does not level out, suppress, marginalize or exclude the voices of others (2003b:56-57). Thus, discursive communality requires both solidarity and justice – a sense of oneness with others and the experience of sameness (fairness) within communicative sociation.

The inclusivity and equal consideration of the voice(s) of others become the basis of Habermas’ formal pragmatic analysis of the rational potential of everyday communicative practices. The voice of reason, he points out, inheres within our discursive practices. Whenever we engage in consensus formation through reasoned argumentation, and, therefore, whenever we engage the ideal and unavoidable presuppositions necessary for reaching agreement (e.g., inclusivity, equal participation), we employ the voice of reason. This is the voice which fuels the communicative social dynamic. This is the voice through which politics is sensitized to everyday needs and concerns and social problems are moralized. And, this is the voice which will allow politics to *catch up* with globalized networks of exchange relations. Habermas is therefore concerned with social spaces which facilitate public discursive practices (e.g., opinion- and will-formation) oriented to reaching understanding.

One of the major problems confronting us today is the imbalance between social (discursive) and systemic (functional) forms of coordinating everyday interactions. The “bureaucratic state and capitalist economy” have become the “driving force of social modernization” (1997:169), and need harnessing. Bureaucratic regulation and exchange relations (system integration) require moral-practical governance (social integration). While both morality and law protect social beings’ inherent dependency and vulnerability, only law can circulate in all spheres of interaction and integration. Law – and politics through law – can speak the language of system. In addressing this issue, Habermas’ critical social theory is

structured around the promise that democratic forms of communicative sociation embody an emancipatory potential.

Two preliminary qualifications regarding emancipation and communicative sociation are necessary. First, Habermas does not view his own theoretical practice as “sketching out a normative political theory”. He suggests that a “well-ordered society” cannot be designed on a “drafting table” (1994b:101). The outcomes of everyday problem solving practices, for instance, are not empirically reproducible from a sketchpad or a pre-given design. As to the task of his critical theory of society, he comments that it should provide “enlightening interpretations of situations, which affect our self-understanding and orient us in action” (1985a:92). Social theory should not project desirable or preferred forms of life onto future social landscapes. Participants must work out their own life-preferences and life-relations cooperatively and communicatively.

Second, he understands his theoretical task to involve the “reconstruction of actual conditions” necessary for an emancipated form of life. These conditions, or, more specifically, the “pragmatic presuppositions” underlying communicative sociation, are the “normative content” of the everyday *practice* of reaching understanding with others (1994b:101-102). They constitute the normative substrate of modern democratically oriented forms of socio-cultural life (1994b:101-102) and facilitate routine (taken for granted) understandings, argumentative discourse and democratic political debate. The foregoing theoretical remarks demonstrate the *prima facie* importance of Habermas’ social theory for understanding social interaction.

1.3 THESIS

As a foundation for the study of everyday social interaction, Habermas’ critical social theory serves three interconnected purposes. First, and foremost, Habermas’ social theory provides a theoretical framework for understanding the communicative basis of the social dynamic. It demonstrates how, under conditions of social modernization, consensually oriented communicative sociation becomes a normative foundation for establishing emancipated forms of life, familial, societal

and global. Second, Habermas' social theory connects family to larger social formations, including global society. It is in family that we first develop and foster the socio-cultural knowledge, moral sensibilities and communicative competence necessary for consensual and cooperative social interaction. And third, Habermasian theory provides a conceptual framework for assessing contemporary families within Canada. It points to the central empirical referents of concordant discursive practices in family.

1.4 FAMILY

A Habermasian theoretical framework provides the working parameters for better understanding and assessing the changing, paradoxical and often ambiguous experiences confronting family members today. Habermas theorizes family as a core private sphere of lifeworld, a sphere which provides a generative, formative and supportive social space. He also contends that an emancipatory potential is embedded within family members' everyday communicative practices (1987c:387).

Practically, family members have the resources, ability, opportunity and motivation to discursively coordinate their lives. They should be able to resolve issues of material survival, generative reproduction, identity formation, need and interest clarification and satisfaction, and even relational domination and oppression consensually and fairly, in everyone's best interest. A democratic discursive practice provides family members with a relational dynamic through which to cooperatively establish, maintain and reestablish forms of family solidarity. Cooperative life-projects such as family require relational structures which sufficiently involve both a concern for others (solidarity) and equal respect (justice). Focusing upon relational structures which foster and support democratic communicative practices opens the spectrum of familial relations to reveal both the emancipatory and the oppressive aspects of everyday life-experience. It also situates the solidarization-desolidarization problematic within family within the conditions and processes of social modernization shaping the evolving interchange between lifeworld and system.

My substantive interest in family is driven, in part, by two questions. What experiential conditions characterize rationalized and democratic familial relations and practices? And, what contribution(s) does family make to any emancipatory impulses? The conceptual importance of family experience within Habermas' critical social theory requires that these questions be addressed. Unfortunately, Habermas tends to leave formative and substantive areas such as family undertheorized. In this regard, one of my major tasks was to make the implicit explicit by developing a Habermasian perspective on family. Family therefore becomes a limit case. However, as important as they are, my research is not directly concerned with mediating structures (e.g., religion, social movements) per se.

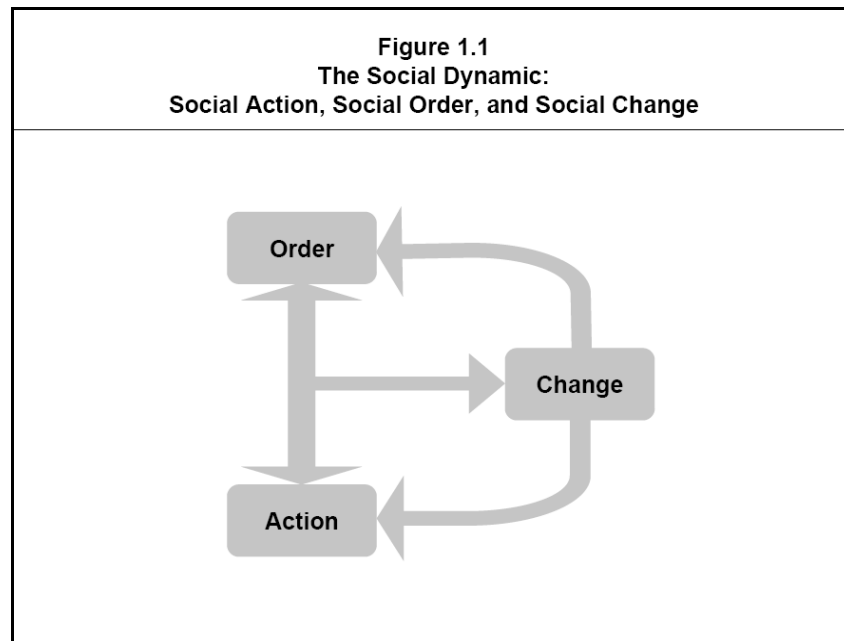
1.5 THE SOCIAL DYNAMIC

All forms of social interaction, including family, take shape within a historically situated social dynamic. Drawing on the primary themes within Sociology's basic orienting questions – action, order, change – a simple representation of the social dynamic is provided in Figure 1.1 below. The action – order – change social dynamic is used as a reflective foil for developing a stylized communicative sociological approach for understanding Habermas' critical theory of society, especially as it concerns family.

The nature of the social dynamic within concrete social formations has significant implications for the everyday life-conditions and life-potentials of individual and familial life-projects, and of more complex life-orders, national and global. All are patterned and conditioned by the nature of the action – order – change dynamic. Although social stratification, inequality and oppression are implicitly present within social action, social order and social change, in this research they are not central or focal themes.

The social action – social order – social change dynamic is an analytic model of Habermas' theory of communicative action and discourse theory. The model accomplishes five objectives. First, it is a simple graphic representation of Habermas' basic argument concerning how individuals communicatively link up their

interactions. Second, it shows the interconnectedness between social interaction and social order. Third, it indicates how social change flows out of social action and social order. Fourth, it emphasizes the central social dimensions of his critical theory of society. And, fifth, by overlaying the model onto different dimensions of everyday life (families, political institutions, global society), it becomes a benchmark for assessing the [potential] 'liberalness' (e.g., non-oppressiveness) of existent social relations.



Habermas argues that different mechanisms of action coordination can lead to different forms of societal integration. However, language oriented to reaching understanding through reasoned discussion is the primordial and more complex mechanism. We use language to interpret the world, and therefore to orient our actions. While language-like media (power, money) relieve the pressure on consensus formation (solidarity) for coordinating interactions within complex social formations, they cannot replace it. If we are to live together peacefully, while respecting each other's differences, then we have to reach agreement about the best way to proceed, within family and between cultures.

1.6 CONCLUSION

In the chapters which follow, the nature of the modern social dynamic within Habermas' social theory structures the discussion of Sociology's grounding questions. Each question foregrounds one of the three core themes of the social dynamic: social action, social order and social change. Chapter two explains the individual-society relationship by exploring the communicative basis of social action. Chapter three addresses the problem of social order by analyzing the importance of communicatively produced solidarity. And, chapter four concentrates on the emancipatory implications of communicative sociation and solidarity for conditioning social change.

CHAPTER TWO

HABERMAS AND THE INDIVIDUAL-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Sociology has always been concerned with the possibility of an emancipated form of life. One contemporary theorist who addresses this issue is German social-philosopher Jurgen Habermas. Over the last four decades he has developed and amended a comprehensive critical theory of society which champions Enlightenment themes of equality, freedom and democracy (Fultner 2003:viii). Habermas argues that modern, everyday life-experience is Janus-faced; it is both oppressive and emancipatory (1987c:403). However, he contends that the normative resources for social actors to consensually establish, maintain and modify non-oppressive life-forms have not been exhausted (1979a:129; 1987b:xix; White 1989:2,3). Accordingly, individual life-plans and collective life-orders need be neither misspent nor distorted, respectively.

At the heart of Habermas' theory of society is a "practical intention" which can be described as "the self-emancipation of men from the constraints of unnecessary domination in all its forms" (McCarthy 1975:xviii; see also Habermas 1973:3,10,16). (Were it written today, this passage would likely be gender inclusive and refer to "women and men", or "all persons".) Habermas claims it is possible to establish a "better and less threatened way of life", one characterized by democratic and egalitarian relationships (1989a:288,299). This is achievable, he argues, through a communicative practice which places participants "in a position to realize concrete possibilities for a better and less threatened life, on *their own* initiative, and in

accordance with *their own* needs and insights” (1989a:299; Unless otherwise stated, all italics are in the original). An emancipatory impulse is therefore “ingrained in the conditions for the communicative sociation of individuals” (1984b:398).

Communicative sociation, which can be loosely understood as a way of talking, refers to the way social life is integrated or coordinated. Social order issues from the interplay of action coordination mechanisms, which in modern societies involves communicative and functional forms. Yet even functional mechanisms are dependent upon communicative action. Contemporary complex and pluralistic societies place a very high premium upon discursive action coordination, and rightly so. In order to fulfil even basic (“elementary”) “social functions” – such as reaching an understanding about something, making or confirming an agreement about how to do something, or expressing how we feel about something – people “have to” act communicatively (1994b:111). In order to resolve problems non-violently or non-coercively, people must consensually coordinate their interactions. For this to happen certain conditions must be met. For example, everyone involved must want to reach agreement, unreservedly.

Both our success oriented interactions, which are accomplished through influencing another or others, and our cooperative (consensual) interactions, neither of which is ‘power free’, are dependent upon our communicative practices. The potential for change, in global society or in family, is contingent upon the problem solving capacities of our everyday communicative resources, conditions and practices. Principles of sociation, or ways of organizing social interaction, and therefore the strategies, solidarities, and motivations which underlay them, are methodologically important measures (indicators) of the rationality of processes of modernization.

Personal and collective identities form, develop and change within the context of a shared life-form and socio-cultural tradition, within which family is a central life-experience. People draw upon, reaffirm and reshape these background resources within everyday communicative experiences. Although learning

processes are built into our everyday action coordinating linguistic practices, and are therefore fundamental to social change, they do not lead, inevitably, to some pre-given or utopian form of life. Furthermore, these processes and practices are historically situated within a lifeworld-system interchange which not only challenges but limits lifeworld communicative and solidaric potentials. Nevertheless, Habermas holds fast to the idea that everyday communicative practices provide a pragmatic medium for achieving a not-misspent life-project or non-distorted life-form. The outcome of these everyday discursive practices remains for participants to determine, consensually. As Habermas stresses, “in a process of enlightenment there can only be participants” (1973:40; 1994b:101), who are socialized and individuated at once.

The following discussion examines the social action – social order – social change dynamic giving heuristic emphasis to how social actors link-up their action plans and projects with one another. In particular, it examines how Habermas’ critical theory conceptualizes the individual-society relationship. I begin with Habermas’ social philosophy and then take up several central themes within his theoretical architectonics.

2.2 HABERMAS’ SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

What can Habermas’ social-philosophy offer to the core issue at hand, to understanding the contemporary social dynamic through the interconnections between social action and social order? More specifically, what is the role and function of the (critical) social-philosopher? To begin, why conjoin the term ‘social’ with philosophy? Why combine sociology and philosophy?

First of all, Habermas did not want to lose sight of the purpose of his work in the details. Thus his approach attempts to integrate concept formation with the analysis of substantive problems. In so doing, he follows a rational pragmatic path. A quote from the 1981 “Preface” to *The Theory of Communicative Action* sums it up quite well: “The more I sought to satisfy the explicative claims of the philosopher, the further I moved from the interests of the sociologist, who has to ask what purpose such conceptual analysis should serve” (1984b:xxxix). There is a clear

advantage to this kind of collaborative, interdisciplinary research, especially considering sociology's concern with the *social*: social action, social order and social change. Habermas uses this "double" perspective to develop what he considers to be a more accurate understanding of the lifeworld (1998c:209).

His attempt to find the appropriate "level of analysis" occurs at both a metatheoretical and a methodological level. First, he constructs a theory of societal rationalization which is, conditionally, universalistic and which avoids any reductionistic tendencies (1987c:396ff). Second, given the hermeneutical and performative nature of understanding the meaning of communicative practices, methodological objectivity involves analysis of "general and encompassing structures of rationality". Sociology, as a "theory of society", he suggests, retains an internal connection to a theory of rationalization through the theory of communicative action (1984b:137, 139-140; also 1987c:396ff). He writes: "Alone among the disciplines of social science, sociology has retained its relations to problems of society as a whole. Whatever else it has become, it has always remained a theory of society as well" (1984b:5). The plausibility of his theory of rationalization for understanding action coordination, social order and social change is also an empirical question. Sociology is well suited to address this issue.

Habermas has made a number of observations about the task of philosophy and the role of philosophers within modern society. His descriptive comments are instructive in that they demonstrate the vitally important interconnection he wishes to retain between theory and practice. Under the postmetaphysical conditions of modern life – of plural life-forms and of competing worldviews – philosophy must assume a "modest" and "pragmatic" (2003d:285; also 1990:211) but nevertheless substantively important role. Very simply, philosophy is the "guardian of rationality" (1990:20). Three ways he has described this guardianship include: the role of interpreter, the role of stand-in and the role of public intellectual.

In an early statement, Habermas distinguishes an "interpreter" role from a "stand-in" role (1990:1ff). On the one hand, philosophy can provide some sense of the underlying totality of things by interpreting the lifeworld – the background of

taken for granted certainties – for participants in communication. On the other hand, it can stand-in for empirically based theories embodying “strong universalistic claims” (15). Beginning with the taken for granted, “intuitive knowledge” of “competent subjects” capable of beliefs, action and speech, a central concern of philosophy as stand-in (and interpreter) would be to explain the “universal bases of rational experience” (15-16). Philosophy’s capabilities reside with its interpretive mediation between “expert knowledge” and “everyday practice” (17). In this way, for instance, a critical social-philosophy could provide “reconstructive hypotheses for use in empirical settings” (16). The “value of a theory”, Habermas suggests, should be its “empirical fruitfulness” rather than its speculative content (1998c:428). In large measure this is the intent of my research, which focuses on possible resonations of Habermas’ critical theory within contemporary family life.

Habermas also conceptualizes the role of the social-philosopher as a public intellectual who voluntarily participates in various public debates concerning societal self-understanding. These public debates, which take place within various levels and networks of the public sphere, become a “sounding board for macrosocial problems” about which “closed, self-referential functional systems” are no longer sensitive. As societies become aware of “failures” and “risks” they are “pushed” to resolve them (2003d:289). While only one of many participants ‘pushing’, public intellectuals’ “well-reasoned opinions” acquire authority within public debates and discussions through the impartial consideration of all viewpoints and the equal consideration of everyone’s interests (2003d:289-290). Habermas’ emphasis upon conditions of symmetry and reciprocity becomes a key theme as this discussion progresses. Current issues of concern to Habermas include: human rights (2003d:291-292), genetic engineering (2003b), cosmopolitanism (2001c), terrorism (2003a:25-45) and inter-religious discourse (2002b). Some references are made to his views on these problems in this and the following two chapters.

Philosophy, which lacks a “universally recognized metaphysical framework”, must realize for itself a modest place within the existing multiplicity of worldviews and life-forms. It cannot provide the “certainties” of religious faith for “existential

crises". It cannot clinically or therapeutically favor one life-form over another. Habermas contends that he has not developed a "master theory" (1994b:114) with a concrete endpoint. Neither is he trying to resolve every problem (1994b:113). He sees his "daily work" as focusing on issues which are contextual and as addressing them there, in that scientific discourse, at that level of abstraction: "I visit separate problems where they live, in the scientific discourses where I find them" (1994b:114).

The challenge for philosophy is to be able to shift between worldviews, levels of abstraction and disciplines while also retaining interconnections (1994b:114). Its concern for conceptual clarification and critique, its grounded connection to everyday intuition and practices and its polyglottic nature enables philosophy to speak beyond individual scientific discourses, and to bring reasoned understanding to public issues. A rationally grounded social philosophy can provide "guidelines" for reflective self-understanding, "of who one is and who one would like to be" (2003d:288-289), as his recent work *The Future of Human Nature* (2003) clearly demonstrates. Social philosophy can encourage individuals to live responsibly and reflectively. "Philosophers don't change the world. What we need is to practice a little more solidarity: without that, intelligent action will remain permanently foundationless and inconsequential" (1994b:96).

Philosophical thought illuminates, "sensibly" and rationally, "not-yet-destroyed phenomena". For instance, it discloses the normative, and therefore solidaric, resources and conditions engendering communicative action (1994b:118). In one interview Habermas points out that philosophy's task is "to clarify the conditions under which moral and ethical questions alike can be decided rationally by the participants themselves" (1993:175). The responsibility for answering substantive questions about justice, or about the not misspent or unfailed life, must fall to participants (1993:176). Furthermore, the moral intuitions necessary for the cooperative resolution of problems depend not on philosophical instruction but, rather, on socialization and individuation processes mediated by communicative practices whose presuppositions already embody "the germ of morality" (1993:132).

Legitimately institutionalized discursive practices and responsible and competent participants are requisite conditions for addressing the “moral-political liabilities” (1990:210) confronting us today: for example, third world “hunger and poverty”, human rights violations, “disparities in social wealth” and opportunity in the western world (1990:211), terrorism and environmental issues. By providing “enlightening interpretations” of modern life-conditions and life-problems, and by identifying the “untapped potential for rationality”, a critical theory of society should help *meliorate* “our self-understanding and orient us in action” (1985a:92). Public intellectuals can also help *ameliorate* the pathological effects of a cultural impoverishment stemming from the expert-layperson divide, from various forms of expertise being separated from everyday communicative practices (1987c:330).

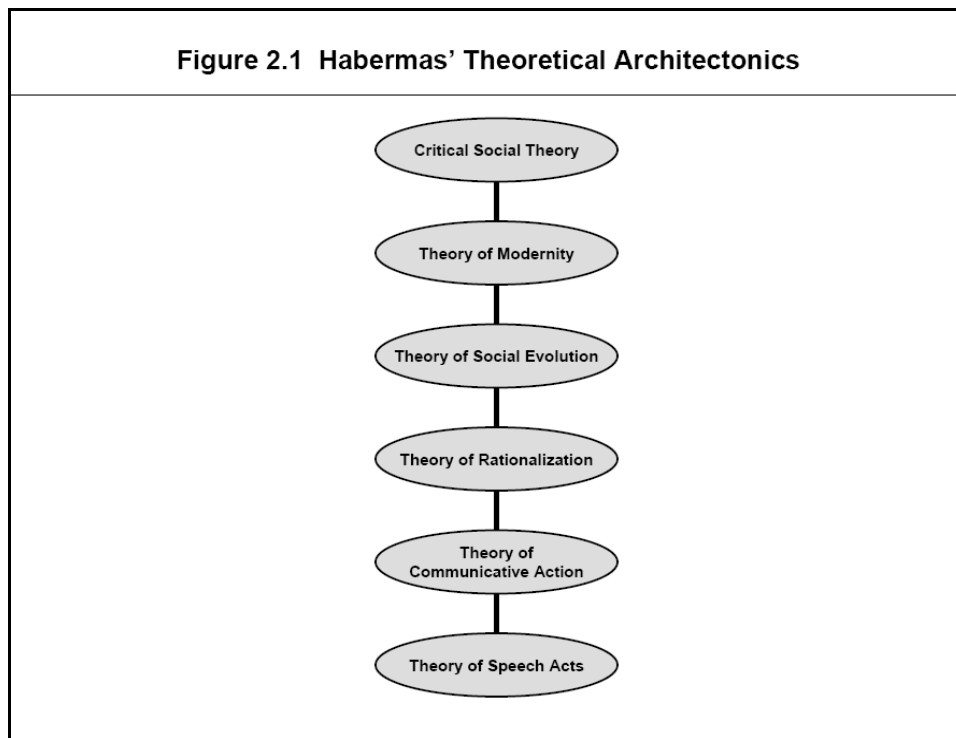
2.3 HABERMAS’ CRITICAL SOCIAL THEORY

2.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Habermas’ lifework as critical theorist and public intellectual reflects his deep and ongoing concern with problems of oppression and prospects for liberation. His response has been a critical theory of society which emphasizes the normative content of everyday communicative practices. The theoretical architectonics underlying his critical theory is sketched out in Figure 2.1. It provides the conceptual framework for articulating the action – order – change basis for the individual-society relationship. Following a brief introduction, key elements within Habermas’ theory of social evolution, model of lifeworld-system interchange, and theory of communicative action are highlighted.

The theory of communicative action, developed in terms of a formal pragmatic reconstruction of the binding and bonding energies of reaching understanding, provides the conceptual basis for understanding how individual social actors link up their actions. For example, it demonstrates how they develop common plans of action, coordinate activities, and cooperatively meet new challenges. The social order issuing from communicative action reflects two characteristics: an actoral commitment to cooperation and responsibility versus a strategic or instrumental attitude; and the rational basis of mutual recognition which

is present in everyday communicative practices (Cooke 1998:4ff). These discursive prerequisites, which are reflected in the concepts “equal respect” and “solidaristic responsibility” (1998a:28, 39, xxxv), are basic conditions for adaptive learning processes. They are built into rational linguistic processes of reaching understanding (and agreement). The “telos” of language is, very simply, reaching understanding (1984b:287).



Formal pragmatics, originally called universal pragmatics (1998c:92 n.1), provides the “theoretical underpinning” (2003d:1) of the theory of communicative action (1984b, 1987c) and discourse theory (1996b), both of which are foundational to Habermas’ critical theory of society (2003d:1). Pragmatics emphasizes the importance of the discursive redemption of validity claims and the idealizing presuppositions which communicative actors must make in order to reach understanding about something (2003d:1; 1998c:25), and to coordinate their interactions. The focus is on language use. By reconstructing the background

presuppositions and the rational motivational basis of action coordination (1998c:110-111), formal pragmatics thereby connects communicative action with a sociological theory of action (1998c:111; 1992b:78-79). In reaching understanding communicatively about something within the objective, social and subjective (inner) worlds, social interactions are cooperatively interlaced within “social spaces and historical times” (1998c:107). Habermas grounds communicative action in the context-transcending validity basis and the world-disclosing ability of processes of reaching understanding.

Communicative action is the core of a theory of modernity which aims at critically assessing pathological tendencies within modern society and at identifying the rationality potential available within everyday communicative sociation. Discourse theory, focusing on a “*higher-level intersubjectivity*” (1998a:248), explicates the normative foundations of modern constitutional democracies (e.g., of morality, law, politics). And, both point to the need for re-balancing the three major resources available today – money, power and solidarity. Habermas’ theory of societal evolution situates these resources within a lifeworld-system interchange model, a model which reflects the paradoxical consequences of lifeworld and system rationalization for everyday experience. Viewed as action contexts, lifeworld and system are organized and integrated through different and often competing action coordinating mechanisms: the natural language(s) of everyday life oriented to reaching understanding, and non-linguistic media of functionally organized subsystems, respectively. The interconnection between lifeworld and system is where the action – order – change dynamic is played out (see Figure 2.2 and Figure 3.1) within modern pluralistic societies. It is where everyday life-experience condenses and crystalizes around common (cultural) forms of knowledge, consensual patterns of behavior and dependencies, and appropriate motivational and behavioral structures, only to open up once again to the challenge of new situations or problems. It is where individuals and society connect.

Within modern life-forms, systemic and non-linguistic media, money and power, unburden language of the task of action coordination. Dilemmatically, this

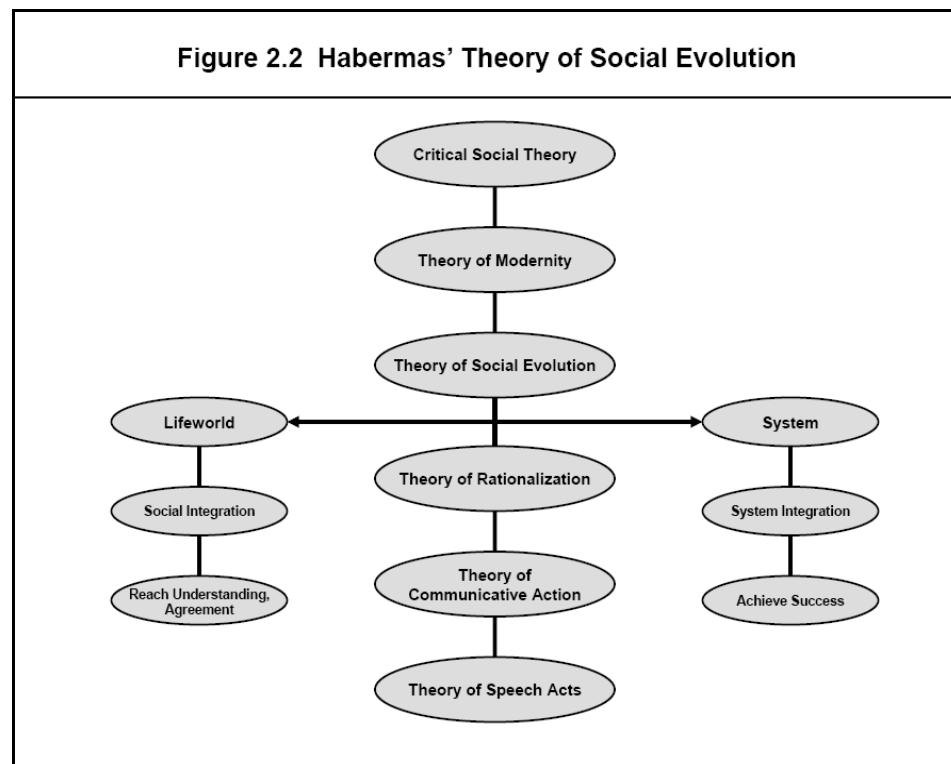
unburdening can also lead to a colonization of lifeworld's communicative capacities. Habermas contends that if life-forms are to be non-distorted, lifeworld originating communicative practices must generate the communicative power necessary for a level of governance capable of sensitizing and orienting autonomous, systemic and globalized economic and administrative networks to the needs and desires of everyone affected: locally, nationally, or globally. Of course the requisite normative resources and conditions (for participants) must be in place, and they require sufficiently rationalized communicative practices. The theory of communicative action and of discourse at the core of Habermas' critical theory of society attempts to demonstrate this "rational potential" through "the reconstruction of a voice of reason" within everyday talk (1998c:207). This voice of reason becomes the basis for understanding the solidaric relationships foundational for solidifying and energizing the rational potential of everyday communicative processes. This voice also contains, he maintains, a "moment of unconditionality" (1998c:206) and of universality (1984b:138) which reaches beyond existing understandings and agreements. Habermas' critical social theory very clearly situates his concern for modern forms of oppression and potentials for emancipation within a historically constituted social dynamic – a dynamic which is continually unfolding.

2.3.2 SOCIAL EVOLUTION

Habermas suggests that if the basis of modern life's paradoxical conditions is to be found in the limitation and loss of a socially produced solidarity, brought about by the colonizing effect of expanding systemic – especially economic – imperatives (2003d:81), then modernity presents us with a "challenge" which need not end in "disaster" (1994b:94). Modernity, however, does not come with "a promise of happiness"; neither does it prefigure or prescribe a utopian form of life (1994b:107). One cannot read off of lived experience substantive or utopian socio-evolutionary end points. Emancipation from forms of domination and oppression may bring greater independence, but not necessarily happiness (1994b:107). Happiness is clinical as opposed to moral, and is connected to the whole of one's lived experience. Therefore happiness is bound to an historically unique experience

within particular forms of life. Given the intensity of these ties, it would be extremely difficult to obtain universal agreement regarding happiness – about what the good life is. However, Habermas contends that recognizing the “necessary conditions” for that life, such as symmetrical and reciprocal relationships, is much easier (1998c:430). These necessary conditions become centrally important as this analysis proceeds.

There are, Habermas argues, “no visible rational alternatives” for modern forms of life (1994b:107), at least as yet. Because modernity is “in our skin”, it cannot be, metaphorically, “peeled off” like a “dirty shirt” (1994b:94). We must rely on our own efforts, using the normative resources available, in order to bring about “practical improvements” (1994b:107). Habermas’ theory of social evolution (see Figure 2.2), which emphasizes the importance of societal development in terms of moral-practical advances for problemsolving, provides a reconstructive account of the historical nature of these paradoxical conditions and of the “adaptive potential”



within modern social formations (1979a:126). His theory of social evolution constitutes the basic framework for a theory of rationalization within a theory of modernity which is the core of his critical theory of society.

Several fundamental yet interconnected assumptions underpin his theory. First, modern social formations are in a process of development; they are unfinished. Within evolutionary processes generally, humanity is experiencing a process of socio-cultural development in which “society is caught up in evolution” (1979a:134). Second, socio-cultural evolution is dependent upon human reason, especially its communicative aspects (Brand 1990:ix), which Habermas explicates through his theory of societal rationalization. Human reason can be understood in terms of a rationality potential and a process of rationalization. Humans are rational. They are sapient as well as sentient (2003d:127ff; 131-132). For Habermas, this rational disposition inheres our linguistic practices and thereby structures our social practices. Language, as such, is therefore “the bearer of socio-cultural learning processes” (1979b:28). Rationalization can be understood as referring to the way social actions are coordinated. Habermas identifies two basic processes, each reflecting a different inner logic: lifeworld and system rationalization (Cooke 1994:5-6). The modern social dynamic evolving out of these action coordinating processes constitutes an intersubjective dimension – an interactive playing field if you will – within which modern social problems arise. Habermas insists that the rationality potential within everyday language provides the means for addressing these problems.

Third, the bearers of this social evolution are “societies and the acting subjects integrated into them” (1979a:140). Mechanisms of social integration have become the means for addressing social-systemic problems. Furthermore, consensual action or communicative action, rather than force, has become the measure of progress (1979a:120). Fourth, the “linguistically established intersubjectivity of understanding”, made possible within communicative practices, facilitates socio-cultural learning and therefore socio-cultural evolution (1979a:99). Thus the pacemaker of socio-cultural change is to be found in individual and social

learning processes. Fifth, socio-cultural learning involves both the reproduction of society and the socialization of its members: “two aspects of the same process” (1979a:99).

Sixth, socio-cultural learning also involves decentering, an ability or capacity to assume different attitudes towards different kinds of experience (Owen 2002:89, 5). Habermas describes decentering in terms of relational or perspectival differentiations: world attitudes and speaker perspectives. On the one hand, in a process of communication, there has to be something to communicate about the world. To do so we must assume basic attitudes towards things in the world (see Figure 2.7). When we state something about the way things are (e.g., “It’s raining.”), we take an objectivating attitude towards an objective world. When we confirm, ask or demand things of our relationships with others (e.g., “Get an abortion.”), we assume a norm-conformative attitude towards a social world. And when we disclose things about our intentions, attitudes and feelings (e.g., “I will pick up the children.”), we assume an expressive attitude towards a subjective world. These three world concepts – objective, social and subjective worlds – become a “reference system for that about which mutual understanding is possible” (1987c:126). As evidenced in Figure 2.7, this knowledge is the basis for validity claims.

The knowledge contained in world concepts is explicit. It is “*something in the world*”: manipulable objects, violated norms, personal experiences (1990:138). This explicit knowledge is different from the implicit background knowledge of the lifeworld. Social actors cannot move outside of their lifeworld or beyond this implicit knowledge. They always have at their backs a reservoir of “unquestioned, intersubjectively shared, nonthematized certitudes” (1990:138). Our communications about something in the world are measured or tested against this background knowledge. As knowledge becomes detached from the lifeworld background, it becomes criticizable and “can be argued about on the basis of reasons” (1990:138). What was “implicitly *certain*” becomes “explicitly *known*” and

linked to “a potential for reasoning” (1990:138). Put another way, lifeworld is “constitutive for mutual understanding” (1987c:126).

On the other hand, communicative actors must also be able to assume speaker or communicative roles which are bound to the system of personal pronouns: first person, second person, third person (1990:138-139). These roles can be understood in terms of two basic attitudes towards the intersubjectively established communication, a performative and an observer attitude. When an actor participates in a communication and relates intersubjectively toward another actor in a performative attitude, a first and second person relation is established. Alternatively, an actor assuming the third person and simply observing something in the world takes an observer attitude (1984b:111). For Habermas, the competence to participate in communicative practices in which consensual agreements coordinate interactions, or the competence to speak and act rationally, is a significant social evolutionary development.

The following abbreviated and highly focused account of Habermas' theory of social evolution takes these learning processes as its point of departure. At the core of his theory of social evolution is the contention that human beings cannot not learn. Humans have the cognitive potential of “not-being-able-not-to-learn” (1979a:147). There is, Habermas has pointed out, a “higher rationality” embodied in our “learning potential” (1994b:108). This ability to learn, or the “automatic inability not to learn”, is the “fundamental mechanism” underlying social evolution (1975:15; also 1979a:147). Critical theory must therefore attune itself to the learning potentials which are historically existent, within a given form of life (1987c:383). Within contemporary social formations emancipatory energies, Habermas claims, have been “unlearned”. They have been “buried over” by media-steered systemic processes (1987c:400; also 395). Communicative potentials for self-direction and self-determination, for example, have become “colonized” (1987c:). Therefore, learning to unlearn “what we have unlearned in the course of learning” requires a critique of the social “deformations” (pathologies) within modern society (1987c:400).

Societies, however, learn in a “metaphorical sense” (1985a:89) or in a “derivative sense” (1979a:121), through the learning capacities of individuals (1985a:89; 1979a:154). Individual and societal learning are interconnected in a “circular process”, due to the “social boundary conditions” (e.g., existing life-forms, norms and values, institutional complexes, political and legal formations) within which social interactions take place (1979a:121). The potential for societal learning depends upon two conditions: the presence of “unresolved system problems that represent challenges” (e.g. which cause distortions within everyday communicative practices), and latent, but culturally available, learning levels within the rationalized structures of lifeworld (e.g., liberalized child-rearing practices). Habermas is concerned that within everyday life, opportunities for rationalized modes of action for dealing with system oriented problems need to be opened (1979a:121-122). Communicative action and discourse theory point in this direction: toward social spaces where only reasons count for coordinating actions, toward legitimate public spaces for fostering and supporting solidarity and communicative power, and toward a process of social change.

Habermas is emphatic about the importance of learning processes in modern society. We “cannot not learn”, either in our interactions with the world (cognitively), or in our dealings with others (morally and practically) (2003d:8). In order to learn, social actors must be “capable” both of (1) speech and of (2) action, and (3) “be affected by reasons” (2003d:8). These capabilities reflect three interconnected “core” rationality structures – speech, action and beliefs (knowledge) (1998c:308ff). Habermas suggests that fallibility is inherent to learning and that it opens life-experience to new possibilities. Learning processes are fallible because social actors are embedded within concrete, historical forms of life, each with its own socio-cultural resources (2003d:9) which are renewed and altered within processes of reaching understanding. Therefore, as new information and experiences arise, and challenge what has become taken-for-granted, past understandings and agreements are called into question and possibly reconfigured.

As noted above, Habermas points out that learning occurs across a range of interactional dimensions, including both the cognitive dimension of actor world relations and the moral-practical dimension of social interaction (2003d:9). However, each of these learning processes is triggered in different ways. Cognitive learning develops in response to the “contingency of frustrating circumstances” within the objective-material world. For instance, we strive for success within our employment as market systems become increasingly globalized and companies engage in outsourcing and off-shoring. Moral(-practical) learning is fostered by the “resistance of social players with dissonant value orientations” (2003d:265, also 256). We debate the issue of gay marriage within our homes and churches, within the media and within politics. These experiences allow new forms of knowledge (e.g., beliefs and understandings) and new social dependencies (e.g., expectations and solidarities) to become culturally stored and therefore usable and transmittable.

2.3.3 OBSERVATIONS

Based on this highly focused summary of Habermas’ theory of social evolution, several preliminary observations are necessary. First, in order to meet our needs, in order to survive, we must socially coordinate our activities: in simple face-to-face interactions within family; in strategically organized work environments; in complex and functionally oriented action systems within the nation state; or in a pluralized, global society marked by fundamental political and cultural-religious differences. As Habermas emphatically states, there is a fundamental need “to coordinate the action-plans of independently deciding participants in action” (2003d:164). Second, language is the primary means by which we accomplish action coordination. Although other language-like media such as money, power and law are important mechanisms of social integration in modern society, language is the primordial and most complex medium (1998a:18). In fact, the ongoing need for social integration, understood elementally as “securing the unity of a social life-world through values and norms” (1979a:144), demonstrates the significance of talking. Habermas, however, tends to use phrases and terms such as *everyday*

communication, language, natural language and ordinary language rather than talking.

Third, ordinary language is one of a number of anthropological advances (another being the “hand”) which can be used multifunctionally (1996b:55). Everyday language has a number of unique features, including its interpretive, circulatory and reflexive capacity, and its general applicability and usability. These qualities position it as an ideal problem solving and lifeworld reproduction mechanism (1996b:55, 353). For example, language acts as a “transformer”, by commuting inner experiences into “intentional contents” (1975:10) intersubjectively shared with others. The resulting intersubjective structures (e.g., associations, patterns) constitute a shared lifeworld of common beliefs, normative standards and motivational patterns.

Habermas speaks of languages as “[c]onceptual systems” which become “sets of conditions of *possibility*” (2003d:217). He writes: “They [languages] do not cover reality like a veil in order to obscure the view. They focus our view of the world so that we are able to correct our beliefs in our joint coping with the world and our discursive coping with others” (2003d:217). Changes to our knowledge of the world in turn, and “in the long run” (2003d:217), become our access to that world in other situations needing interpretation. Our individual life-trajectories comprise a long string of these communicatively mediated situations. As discussed below, social integration flows out of the binding and bonding energies of reaching understanding within these linguistic practices (1996b:8).

Fourth, Habermas’ theory of communicative action provides an explanation of how speech, or more specifically speech acts, coordinate actions and produce chains of interactions (1998c:106, 111). This is accomplished through cooperatively achieved consensus as a means of solving problem situations. The telos of language, reaching understanding (1998d:120), serves this need very effectively. In fact Habermas refers to reaching understanding as the “*original mode* of language use”. Other uses, such as the strategic use of language, are, he argues, “parasitic” (1998c:122,; also 1979a:1). Furthermore, the rational basis for the action

coordination devolving from reaching understanding resides with the “core” “speech act offer” – a validity claim about something in the world – and “a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ position” on that offer (1998c:198-199). Fifth, social actors must “master” language use through practice in order to reach understanding. This “requires socialization into a form of life” (1992b:63). Thus the restrictive or facilitative capacities of family, community, nation-state or even a world of nations, has action – order – change as well as identity forming implications.

Sixth, it is important to keep in mind that complex concepts such as languages, worldviews and forms of life refer both to *particularities* and to *totalities*. On the one hand, all three exist in plural forms. This multiplicity helps give formal shape to another complex concept, pluralism. One characteristic feature of modern life is, Habermas contends, that the “naive consensus” which once held social experience, social time and social space together has shattered: “Individuals, groups, and nations have drifted far apart as regards their backgrounds of biographical and socio-cultural experience. This pluralization of diverging universes of discourses is part of specifically modern experience” (1998c:403-404). From a communicative perspective and under modern pluralistic life-conditions, living together cooperatively and communicatively means reflectively establishing an acceptable balance between “good reasons” and “life-habits”, between “mutual understanding” and “social currency” (1998c:406), and between cooperation and coercion (or influence). Everyone must work through their life-experiences reflectively, intersubjectively and cooperatively.

On the other hand, these three – languages, worldviews, forms of life – are experienced as totalities by members of any particular socio-cultural formation. Languages limit the world, objective, social or inner. Worldviews provide meaning frameworks which, while revisable, cannot be accessed in total. In other words, they are not “true or false”. Members cannot remove themselves from their particular form of life – “the everyday practice of sociated individuals” – though they can make “ad hoc” alterations within defined horizons, within their own socio-cultural life-setting. Language is used by members of a cultural community to make sense

of and to plan and organize “personal and social lives”. And, since worldviews give meaning to everything seen and experienced (within the world, linguistically), that is they “structure forms of life”, they should not be used to assess the rationality of everyday practices, and should not be confused with a rational form of life. Worldviews are “equally primordial possibilities” for giving meaning to life (1984b:58-59). Practically, or from participating members’ perspectives, all three – language, worldview, form of life – are “intertwined” (1998c:187).

Seventh, it should also be noted that ordinary language’s ties to background (lifeworld) contexts and the potential for dissent makes it a “risky mechanism” (1987a:350) for communicatively linking interactions. Nonlinguistic media (e.g., money, power, law) therefore relieve everyday language of its communicative responsibilities – with paradoxical results (discussed below). Communicative action and discourse theory expose these social life-dynamics and complexities to a sociological gaze. They demonstrate, for example, the importance of a “neutral” constitutional state for managing, peacefully, competing metaphysical-religious views which individuals and communities hold (2003b:40).

Eighth, within everyday life, responsibility for meeting needs, resolving problems and coordinating life-plans and life-projects discursively resides with social actors who are at once situated, sociated, individuated and motivated. Each individual life-project is intimately connected to a larger collective form of life shared in cooperation with others: “individual life-projects do not emerge independently of intersubjectively shared life contexts” (2003b:2). “Even the innermost essence of a person is internally connected with the outermost periphery of a far-flung network of communicative relations” (1993:131). Our knowledge and beliefs are apprehended and confirmed through intersubjectively achieved meaning. Our relational dependencies and solidarities are established and renegotiated within forms of social integration already intersubjectively achieved. And, our motivations, attitudes and needs – as well as our individuality – are shaped within socialization processes, therefore, intersubjectively (1987a:346).

In regards to the last point, Habermas' stresses that "socialization takes place in the same proportion as individuation, just as, inversely, individuals are constituted by society" (1987a:347). We are socialized and individuated at the same time. Socialization, like individuation, can be understood as mediating between the individual and society (1987a:334). Consequently, identity formation depends upon relations of reciprocal recognition (1993:130-131), just as it does on relations of symmetry. The forms and conditions of solidary relations underlying all levels of interaction are therefore foundational.

Ninth, there is an expectation that acting, speaking and knowing subjects are capable of "constructive accomplishments" (2003d:173). Habermas writes: "rational beings who find themselves in an intersubjectively shared lifeworld have also to assume discursive responsibility before one another for how they cope with a contingent reality" (2003d:173). In dealing with material constraints within the objective world of things, there are no self-evident normative guidelines, emanating from within this world, for "coping with one another" or coordinating activities to achieve goals and meet needs. Coping with social contingencies, with differences in beliefs, values, needs and wants, requires a process of mutual understanding about appropriate normative standards for establishing a legitimate coexistence (2003d:173). This can only happen intersubjectively, and only through accountable participants. And, it can only happen only if communicative processes are embedded within "shared assumptions and practices", within a shared lifeworld (1990:25).

And tenth, Habermas presents the framework of a theory of intersubjectivity (1992b:141,145) which serves as a "reference point" for a communicatively and procedurally achieved "common will" (1992b:141). This framework forms the foundation for mutual understanding and agreement, for obligations necessary for further interactions, and for social change. He suggests that the basis of an "intact intersubjectivity" can be derived from the conditions required for consensus formation: "symmetrical relations marked by free, reciprocal recognition" (1992b:145). He is careful to note that these conditions are formal characterizations

and not utopian projections. (It is a clarification to which I refer periodically.) While the not misspent life-project and non distorted life-form does not have to be “free of conflict”, they can only be achieved intersubjectively, and therefore discursively, within practices “marked by solidarity” (1992b:146). Again, the significance of solidarity, familial or otherwise, cannot be overstated.

The question now becomes, what is the nature of the social action – social order – social change dynamic (and of the individual-society relationship) within which this intersubjectivity takes shape and operates? Not surprisingly, this raises three further questions (which often remain in the background). Where is the voice of reason within modern social formations? What are the necessary conditions for this voice to be heard? And, how are emancipatory impulses possible through this voice? The voice of reason, Habermas argues, can only be heard within communicative action. And, his lifeworld-system interchange model explains the nature of the societal dynamic within which everyday communicative practices take place. He concludes that emancipatory energies, while constrained, are indeed available.

2.3.4 LEFWORLD-SYSTEM INTERCHANGE

2.3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

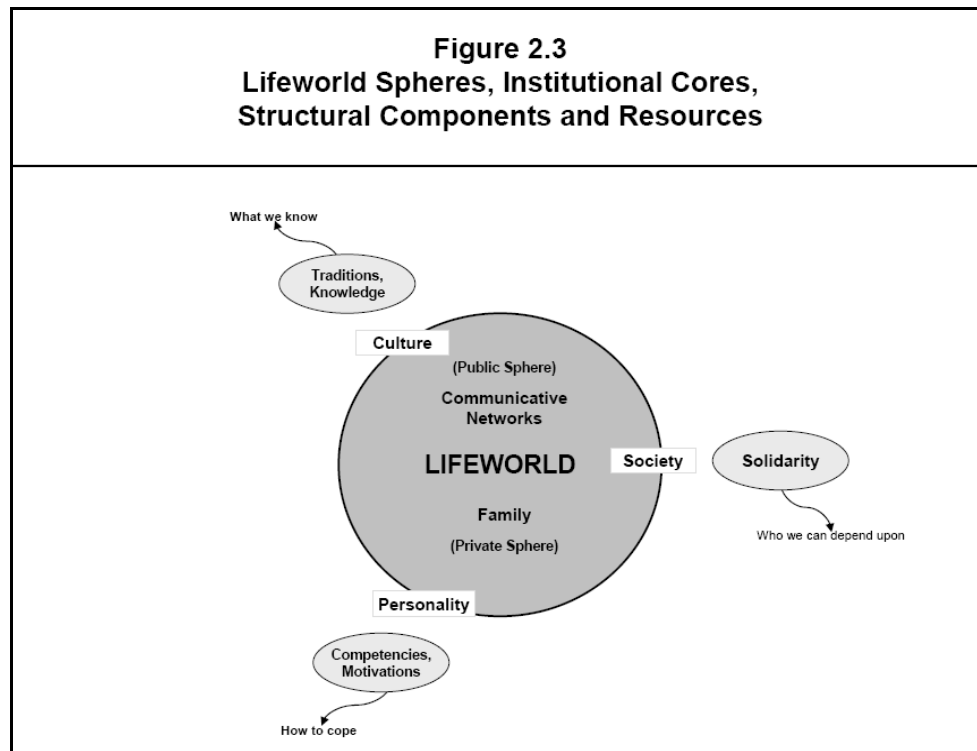
How does Habermas understand the nature of modern social formations? As depicted in Figure 2.2, Habermas’ “heuristic proposal” (1987c:152) is that social evolution should be understood as a “second-order process of differentiation” (1987c:152), a process in which society has become bifurcated into lifeworld and system (1987c:153ff; also 1975:1-17). Lifeworld and system are variously described as: two different sides or aspects of societal development (1987c:153ff; also 1975:1-17); two planes of social interaction (1987c:180); or two “analytical concepts of [social] order” (1991a:251). Each of these explications has a particular analytic function, appropriate to a specific level of analysis. One common theme running through all three is that different rationalization processes (or logic) are at work in lifeworld and system. Notably however, even though lifeworld and system are analytically separable, they are interconnected in a recursive process of

historical development and lived experience. Figures 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 diagrammatically represent the central features of lifeworld and system, and of the lifeworld-system interconnection.

On the one hand, lifeworld designates a horizon-forming context for communicative interaction and a reservoir of resources for social actors to draw upon when engaged in communicatively oriented social action (1984b:70; 1987c:221). As an action context it is institutionalized both in a private sphere, where intimate interactions and socialization occur, and in a "political public sphere of private persons" ("communicative networks"), which acts as "a medium of permanent criticism" of political forms of domination (1984b:341; 1987c:318-319; see Figure 2.3). On the other hand, system, narrowly interpreted, indicates contexts in which social actions are functionally coordinated through non-linguistic means. Here, action contexts are anchored in formally organized, autonomous subsystems: for example, the economy and bureaucratic state apparatus (1987c:171,183, 318ff; 1991a:252-257). What is distinctive about lifeworld is the constitutive priority of language for resolving problems, reproducing everyday interactions and interconnecting lifeworld's private-public infrastructure. By contrast, what is typical for system is its special codes (money, power), which enable autonomous and complex social networks to develop relatively independent from actoral involvement (1996b:55).

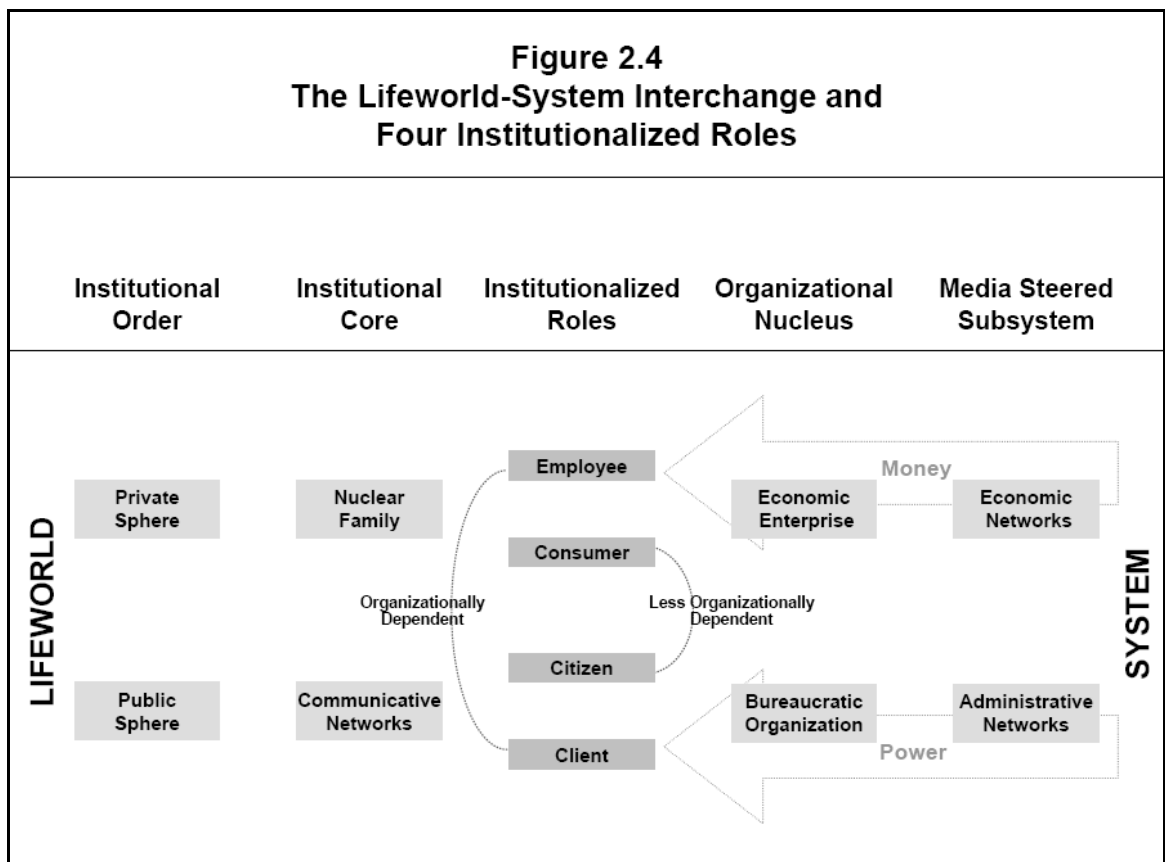
Regarding the action coordination of social actors, Habermas distinguishes between lifeworld and system in terms of two modes of societal integration: social and system integration (1991a:252). In turn, these modes reflect two aspects (e.g., different inner logics) of societal rationalization: growing autonomy and reflexivity of a structurally differentiated lifeworld, and growing system complexity, respectively (1984b:342,343; 1987c:145,152,153; 1987a:346). More specifically, lifeworld rationalization signifies the "differentiation" and the "condensation" ("at once") of three structural components: culture ("store of knowledge"), society ("legitimate orders"), and personality ("acquired competencies") (1987a:343,346). System

rationalization connotes increasing complexity as a process of both the extension and the increasing density of system (functional) influence and control (1987c:351).



However, Habermas clearly indicates that the lifeworld "defines the pattern of the social system as a whole" (1987c:154; also 317). He argues that lifeworld is the "more comprehensive concept of order" out of which media-steered subsystems, through specialized non-linguistic media (money and power), have become differentiated from the "social component of the lifeworld" (1991a:262). And, given this prioritization, systemic mechanisms of action coordination must be institutionally "anchored in [the] lifeworld" (1987c:154) through the legally constituted and formally organized roles such as employee, consumer, client and citizen (1987c319; 1991a:256). Thus, contemporary productive and social formations are shaped by the way system integrating mechanisms are "institutionally anchored" within the society or "social" component of the lifeworld (1991a:262; see Figure 2.4).

For Habermas, societal rationalization "first appears as a restructuring of the lifeworld" (1984b:341). The traditional normative framework began to unravel because traditional interpretations, no longer "immune from criticism", lost their hold on social action (1984b:340). Increasingly, participants in social action had to establish new consensual agreements through their own "interpretive" efforts (1984b:339-340, 100, 101). To the extent social interaction has come to be "guided" by "communicatively *achieved* understanding", versus "normatively *ascribed* agreement" for example, everyday communicative practice is considered to be rationalized (1984b:340). And, the more rationalized lifeworlds become, the greater the demand for communicative sociation, for consensual agreement (1987a:349-350). Modern forms of sociation seem to embody a "growing need" (1984b:341) for coordinating actions through achieving understanding.



Habermas contends that a rationalized everyday life involves a "decentered understanding of the world" (1984b:340), an understanding which is open to analysis, to debate and to change (1984b:340-341). Within their communicative practices, actors can differentiate between central features of background contexts, such as an external world of facts and events, a social world of relational expectations, and an inner world of feelings and attitudes. Decentering means actors increasingly must reach understanding and agreement about these worlds of experience, using their own interpretive accomplishments (1984b:101).

However, the growing demand for consensus is increasingly met by risky agreement (1984b:340). It is risky because of the "double contingency" built into every "communicatively achieved agreement" (1998c:236). The underlying validity claims can be accepted or rejected by taking either a yes or no position. While consensus may occur, there is also a significant possibility of disagreement (1984b:341). The more one engages in communicative action, the more risk of failure there is. Dissent rather than consensus may occur. Not every concern can be discussed or debated. Not every goal or plan of action can be communicatively and cooperatively coordinated. Not every social actor wants to participate consensually. And not all background assumptions are sufficiently overlapping for consensus. As a mechanism for coordinating action, "great demands" are placed on reaching understanding (1984b:341). This burdening effect tends to become amplified in highly organized, highly developed and highly rationalized societies.

Eventually lifeworlds must be "disencumbered" from this form of action coordination. Ordinary language must be supplemented by "special" languages which can "free" social processes from reaching agreement consensually. In this way social interactions become, to a certain extent, "deworlde" from their ties to an intersubjectivity dependent upon lifeworld certainties (e.g., culture, society, personality) and the reproduction of those resources through meaning, understanding and agreement. These special languages, also referred to as "steering languages", "condition" social actors' decisions through a "built-in preference structure" (1987a:350-351) which bypasses the reflective and consensus

oriented use of everyday language. "[D]elinguistified media", money and power, tend to replace practices of mutual understanding "in two central domains of action", the capitalist economy and the state apparatus, respectively (1987c:154). Money and power, as substitutes "for special functions of language" (1987c:263), are able to relieve the demands placed on achieving consensus. Thus, a rationalized lifeworld has also led to the "*complementary*" development of two media-steered action subsystems, the economy and the state (1991a:256; 1984b:341,342; 1987c:317,318).

Habermas identifies several basic effects of uncoupling action coordination from everyday communicative practices, and therefore from lifeworld certainties such as cultural traditions, group memberships and individual abilities (1987c:262). Firstly, steering media such as money and power conserve interpretive energies (1987c:262). Social actors no longer need to negotiate and renegotiate each social act. Secondly, the costs associated with dissent and failure in communicative action are reduced (1987c:262-263). Money and power (and law) tend to "neutralize" action coordination from "the alternatives of achieved versus failed agreement" (1987c:263). Thirdly, while both of these points reflect a liberating process which is characteristic of media-steered action coordination, they also point to the possibility that increasingly complex and autonomous patterns of interaction can develop. Finally, since no one needs to "survey and stand accountable for these communication networks", media-steered interactions do not need "responsible participants", that is social actors who are oriented toward achieving consensus (1987c:263).

2.3.4.2 SOCIETAL INTEGRATION

Habermas characterizes the "*counteracting* tendencies" inherent within societal rationalization – the rationalization of everyday communicative (lifeworld) structures and the growing complexity of autonomous subsystems – in terms of "contradictory" or competing "*principles of societal integration*" (1984b:341,342). These principles, social integration and system integration, identify different processes for generating "social order from interactions" (1991a:252). In respect

to the social integration of action orientations, society is understood as "the lifeworld of a social group" (1987c:117; 1991a: 253). Here, action orientations are harmonized either normatively or consensually (1987c:117). By contrast, systemic integration requires that society be conceived as "a system of actions such that each action has a functional significance according to its contribution to the maintenance of the system" (1987c:117). Accordingly, actions are stabilized through the functional network of action consequences (1987c:117).

On the one hand, the concept of action orientations refers to the values, norms and competencies which guide and limit decisions regarding setting goals and selecting alternative means for achieving those goals (1987c:202,206,221,232, also 142 Figure 21). Actors consciously and reflectively harmonize these orientations when they strive to reach agreement on an issue and when they try to consensually coordinate plans of action in order to achieve their aims. As Habermas explains, participants' actions are "coordinated through a harmonizing of action orientations that is present to them" (1987c:202; 1991a:252). Thus, social integration, as a "consensus-forming" mechanism (1991a:252), "takes effect" in participants' "consciousness" (1987c:202). Here, social actors are, at least generally, "intuitively" aware of life-orders developing around social integration (1991a:252).

On the other hand, action consequences indicate a "freedom" social actors have "to make their decisions depend only on calculating the success of their actions" (1987c:264). In social actions of this type, actors attempt to influence the decisions of other actors in order to achieve their goals. Generally, in strategic action actors do not utilize processes of reaching understanding (1991a:240-241). Where social integration "attaches" to participants' action orientations, system integration reaches "right through" consciousness and functionally integrates social action (1987d:202; also 1991a: 252). In this case, social actors are not intuitively aware of life-orders established by system integration. These orders are counterintuitive (1991a:252).

Habermas also characterizes the two action integrating processes undergirding societal maintenance or reproduction in terms of a "continuously renewed compromise between two series of imperatives" (1987c:233): one grounded in lifeworld and mutual understanding, the other in system and purposive activity (1987c:232). He notes that while social integration represents the symbolic reproduction of everyday life, functional integration signifies "a material reproduction of the lifeworld" that is "conceived as system maintenance" (1987c:232-233). Processes of reaching agreement establish the conditions for lifeworld's social integration vis-a-vis lifeworld's three symbolic structures: culture, society and personality (1987c:233). By contrast, the conditions for society's functional integration are defined by "the relations of a lifeworld objectified as a system" vis-a-vis exchange processes "with its surroundings" (1987c:232,233). A major premise underlying these differentiations is the notion that the development of patterned social action depends on the possibility that plans of action can be coordinated "in a sufficiently conflict-free way". On the one hand, social order issues directly from social actors "themselves" harmonizing their plans, through reaching agreement. On the other hand, social order devolves from "an *objective* harmony of action plans", through steering media in the market (1982:264-265).

Just as individuals experience various situational restrictions when executing their plans of action (e.g., time, space, material), lifeworlds also confront "corresponding restrictions": physical (material) objects, human beings, other lifeworlds. However, lifeworld members see these material conditions as "barriers" to their plans and not as "self-steering" problems (1987c:231-232). Because of lifeworld's communicative infrastructure, it is the action system, as opposed to a system environment, which is important. Where reaching understanding is central to lifeworld's symbolic reproduction, purposive activity is necessary (or action oriented toward success) for its material reproduction (1987c: 232). What is central to lifeworld's material reproduction, and therefore its survival, is the necessary exchanges it must undertake with its surroundings – through action. These exchanges occur within functionally organized action systems. Actions in these

contexts require a success orientation. At this level of analysis, lifeworld must be understood as a "boundary-maintaining system" in order to account for these functional requisites (1987c:232). Since functional imperatives reach beyond intentional efforts (action coordinating efforts; 1993:169), a participant perspective will not suffice.

2.3.4.3 SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Using social integration as the "conceptual strategy", society is understood as lifeworld (1987c:150): "a network of communicatively mediated cooperation, with strategic relations and ruptures inserted into it" (1987c:148). On this account, lifeworld is neither void of strategic action, nor free from power relations (1991a:246, 247, 254, 258). The "micro-physics of power" simply mirror the "macrosociological power relations" (1991a:247). Nevertheless, Habermas contends that social reproduction occurs only through communicative action, and not via steering media (1991a:259). Indeed, problems or pathologies surface when the "conditions" for lifeworld reproduction are taken over or colonized by media-steered interactions (1991a:259; 1984b:398).

By communicatively organizing social action, social integration both utilizes and renews the three structural components of the lifeworld: culture – stored in traditions, solidarity – from embeddedness within group memberships, and personality – established through socialization processes (1987c:232-233, 255, 138, 139; 1987a:343). This means that these components become both resources and delimitations ("at the same time") for consensually oriented social action (1984b:70; 1987c:221, 255; 1991a: 245). As delimitations or "determinants" they restrict the "scope for action". And, as resources, they engender what is experienced (1991a: 245). Consequently, culture, society and personality both inform and form social experience. A simple approximation of some of the conceptual linkages is presented in Figure 2.3 above. It is important to remember that all three components are interconnected within lifeworld's reproduction. To view them otherwise, to reduce lifeworld reproduction to any one concept, would

result in a “one-sided” culturalistic, institutionalistic or sociopsychological formulation (1987c:139).

These components (culture, society, personality), Habermas suggests, are continually maintained and reproduced within everyday communicative practices. As social actors attempt to reach understanding about a problem and to develop a plan of action to deal with it, they rely on an intuitive knowledge of what they know (e.g., usable knowledge), on whom to rely (e.g., established practices, expectations), and how to cope (e.g., socialized abilities, skills) (1987c:221-222). Lifeworld is reproduced (linguistically) through "the continuation of valid knowledge, [the] stabilization of group solidarity, and [the] socialization of responsible actors" (1987c:137). The underlying reproduction processes – cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization, respectively – are evaluated by different means or “standards”: valid (“rational”) knowledge, group solidarity, individual responsibility (1987c:141). When valid “interpretive schemes” fail, meaning becomes scarce. When legitimate “social memberships” no longer coordinate actions in new or problem situations, solidarity becomes scarce. And when personality (abilities, competencies,) no longer supports (or when it inhibits) participation within interaction, “ego strength” becomes scarce (1987c:140-141).

Three underlying themes are important here. Lifeworld reproduction is highly dependent upon the “degree” of lifeworld’s structural differentiation, or the degree of lifeworld rationalization (1987c:142). These reproductive processes are also accomplished through everyday communicative practices, through communicative action. And the presuppositions underlying these communicative practices are foundational. The nature of these presuppositions will be addressed in greater detail later.

For Habermas the communicative process structuring the lifeworld embodies "a directional dynamics" characterized by "inner-worldly processes of learning" (1991a:224). As "the reproductive achievements" of communicative action alternate from "a state of pre-established pre-understanding" to a "consensus to be achieved", and as life-experiences are incessantly tested against lifeworld

certainties, the structural components of the lifeworld are subject to change (1991a:224). This reproduction process links lifeworld contexts and "conditions" with "new situations" and new problems (1987c: 137). For instance, when social actors arrive at a common understanding about some practical problem (e.g., which parent will stay home with a sick child), they are participating in an interaction "through which they develop, confirm, and renew" beliefs, normative expectations and motivations and attitudes (1987c:139). Just as these resources (meanings, expectations, skills) are utilizable in the present, they are also storable, renewable and changeable. As part of the lifeworld background they become future resources even for future generations (1987c:138). They become part of a recursive learning process.

This recursiveness emphasizes the "complementary" nature of communicative action and lifeworld. Lifeworld's reproduction depends upon the "interpretive performances" of its members. Increasingly members' yes or no decisions regarding validity claims are no longer simply tied to an "ascribed normative consensus" (1987a:342-343). Thus the structural components of lifeworld (culture, society, personality) are constituted by "correlative processes of reproduction" which are in turn generated through practices of communicative action (1987a:343).

Habermas writes that, "the further the structural components of the lifeworld and the processes that contribute to maintaining them get differentiated, the more interaction contexts come under conditions of rationally motivated mutual understanding" (1987c:145 ; 1987a:346). These discursive conditions raise the possibility that the veracity of traditions and knowledge, the legitimacy of social solidarity and the appropriateness of motivations and skills can come under the scrutiny of individual "interpretive performances" within communicative interaction contexts (1987c:133; 1987a:342-344, 346). However, this also means that everyday communicative practices can become increasingly burdened with the responsibility of achieving understanding or coordinating plans of action. Functional imperatives can relieve this pressure by more efficiently and more effectively

organizing social actions (1987c:321). With this shift, social reproduction becomes subject to subsystem imperatives. Significantly, cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization can also become communicative "pores" (1991a:226) which clog as systemic imperatives permeate lifeworld provincialities.

The directional impetus which inheres within lifeworld reproductive processes sets the pattern for societal evolution (1987c:148), and, therefore, for the uncoupling of lifeworld and system, for the lifeworld-system interchange mechanism, for lifeworld colonization, and, of course, for familial interaction. As a thought experiment, Habermas wonders what the logical end points would be, were this developmental process to continue, unhindered. He suggests that such an "idealized projection" is not simply arbitrary because everyday life-experience can be reflected back against it. He suggests the following three "vanishing points" are possible: reflexive culture ("reflexivity"); discursively established generalized norms ("universalism"); and "risk-filled self-direction" ("individuation") (1987a:344-345).

For any of the three components, the directional pattern is not linear. Reproduction processes are based upon meaning contexts constituted by "discontinuous tools of critique", social integration established by a "risky" and "individualistically isolating universalism"; and (fragile) identities shaped by "extremely individualized socialization" (1987a:346). Indeed, the "jagged profile of rationality potentials" sets into relief modern pathologies associated with lifeworld-system differentiation and the development of autonomous and functionally integrated spheres of economy and bureaucracy (1987a:346). Habermas claims that lifeworld complexity is circumscribed by systemic constraints placed upon communicatively achieved agreement. While some means of coordinating our interactions is needed to relieve these communicative practices, the autonomous and functionally integrated action systems that have developed in response to this need can have a colonizing (pathological) effect upon lifeworld.

2.3.4.4 FUNCTIONAL INTEGRATION

From the perspective of system maintenance, functional integration "is equivalent to a material reproduction of the lifeworld" (1987c:233). Habermas

describes the material reproduction of society as the procurement of "its physical maintenance both externally and internally" (1987c:110). In order to maintain themselves, social systems engage in "regulated" exchanges "with their social and natural environments" (1987c:159-160; also 1991a:255). For members of society, the maintenance of the material substratum of the lifeworld (e.g., physical bodies) occurs through "goal-directed interventions into the objective world" (1987c:232), through (primarily) success oriented activities.

In modern society action systems have adapted to "functional specifications of social cooperation" in two dimensions, "*power and exchange relations*" (1987c:160). On the one hand, "buyers" and "sellers" develop exchange relations in the marketplace; on the other hand, "commanders" and "dependants" develop power relations within bureaucratic relationships (1985c:155; 1987c:154). As both "wage labour" and the "individual household of private employees", and as both the state and "client relations" have become institutionalized, lifeworld participants experience an intrusion into "traditional forms of labour and life" (1991a:256).

According to Habermas, social relations within the economy and the state, are managed primarily by money and power. These delinguistified media are designed to accommodate formally organized, "standard situations" (1991a:258). Through "a built in structure of preferences", they "condition action decisions" independent of lifeworld resources (1991a:258) (e.g., cultural knowledge, group memberships and personal competencies). Steering media such as money have "the properties of a code" which relay information (1985c:156). Prices, for example, embody an offer and an enticement to accept that offer (1985c:156). In effect, prices (as a steering medium) link participants' actions strategically through their success oriented action. Consequently, media steered interaction tends to avoid the risks associated with consensus oriented action (1985c:156).

More specifically, not only do steering media "demand" social actors adopt a strategic orientation (1991a:254), but social actors' goals "become the means of system maintenance" (Cooke 1994:146). Therefore social order, and its regular and stable interaction patterns, evolves out of the functional coordination of the

goals of strategic actors (see 1985c: 155). It is the steering media and not processes of communication which integrate the economic and administrative action systems (1991a:257). However, the condition for maintaining a success oriented attitude involves an inversion of means and ends: "for the medium itself is now the transmitter of the respective subsystem's system-maintaining imperatives" (1991a:258). Even the "integrative achievements" of the steering media do not appear within "the horizon to which the participants in interaction orient themselves" (1991a:252). Participants experience this as an "objectification of social relations" (1991a:258). Media-steered interactions "embody" a functional "form of reason" (1991a: 258).

2.3.4.5 COMMENTS

Before moving on to discuss formal aspects of the lifeworld-system interchange and communicative action, a few summary comments are presented. First, lifeworld is basically a thick but simple network of interactions, or of communicative actions (1996b:354). Both the private and public spheres of the lifeworld (see Figure 2.3) reflect this elemental idea, and require reproduction through these interactions. They can, however, be differentiated in one respect, namely intimacy. Within lifeworld's private spheres, such as family and friends, individual life-histories are interconnected within "face-to-face interactions" (1996b:354). There is a privacy, albeit opaque in some dimensions, which envelops the social times and spaces of these more intimate interactions. By contrast, the public sphere is, in essence, characterized by its publicness. The notion of privateness-publicness is addressed more systematically in Chapter Four.

The lifeworld's public sphere is "best described", according to Habermas, as "a network for communicating information and points of view" (1996b:360). Still, he notes that while it is a basic "social phenomenon", the public sphere nevertheless is difficult to understand in terms of social order. Just as for lifeworld generally (1996b:80), the public sphere is neither an institution nor an organization. (However, systemically, lifeworlds and their internal structures are viewed as environments. It is in this sense that Figures 2.4 and 2.6 employ the term institutional.) It does not

involve a normative structure as such, and therefore lacks sociological constructs such as roles and membership. Its public and communicative structure allows for openness, permeability, and variability. For example, within the public sphere all issues, problems and concerns within everyday life can be expressed, considered and clarified. Yet it is neither specialized in the general lifeworld reproductive functions (socialization, social integration, cultural reproduction) nor the validity basis of modern science, morality and art (truth, rightness, truthfulness). The public sphere is characterized as a communicatively produced “social” and “public” (1996b:360, 361) space. This space is only possible when actors engage in communicative action, and thereby commit to the presuppositions necessary for reaching agreement: for example, seeking the best argument, openness to participation of all. As a communicative space, the public sphere can be expanded to include more participants. Using “architectural metaphors” (“structured spaces”) to give a formal character to these social spaces, Habermas notes that public “assemblies, performances, presentations” can be understood as “forums, stages, arenas” (1996b:361).

The importance of the public sphere in regards to the development of communicative power will be discussed in the next chapter (1996b:361). For the moment, suffice it to say that without a *public* there would not be a public sphere (1996b:364), and that this *public* is drawn from civil society generally and from the intimate or private sphere (e.g., family) of lifeworld specifically (1996b:354). The life-histories of individuals, which are embedded within concrete forms of life and by extension within families, become “antenna” and flashpoints for the burdens created by “systemic deficiencies”. Within the public sphere, the “echo” of private experience (1996b:365) – about health issues related to environmental degradation for instance – resonates discursively, thereby shaping public opinion which in turn may have system influencing potential.

Second, systems’ media work both symmetrically and asymmetrically. On the one hand, money and power integrate social actions, within self-steering systems of action, without the “*intentional*” efforts of actors (1993:169). On the other hand,

these media depend upon the lifeworld assymmetrically even though both are legally “embedded” in the lifeworld (see Figure 2.4). While the economy envelops both production and labour power, the “democratic state apparatus” must be continually legitimated by a process of communicatively produced power. The state is not able to completely control clients through administrative power. Habermas writes that it cannot be cut off from its discursive “roots” (public opinion- and will- formation) “to the same extent that production steered by market forces can be severed from lifeworld contexts of active labour” (1993:169). Were it to be otherwise, lifeworld imperatives, and the needs and concerns expressed therein, would have no meaning, at least in terms of influencing system (see Figure 3.1).

The difference in dependence upon the lifeworld between the capitalist economy and the administrative state can be understood in terms of the extent to which their respective environments must speak to them in their own language, by means of their respective steering mechanism (money and power). This need is variable. Issues formulated in the public sphere (or the lifeworld) are expressed in a different mode than consumer decisions in the marketplace. The language of money is “prices”; the language of power is “institutional directions”. Inputs must be expressed appropriately in order to be “comprehensible” within each system (1993:169).

Lifeworld’s potential impact within the democratic state is illustrated by Habermas’ discussion of how political and administrative systems use law: either normatively or instrumentally, respectively. Political bodies use practical reason in justifying or applying laws. Normative reasons, which are tied to communicative power, must support political action. To administrations, reasons are “constraints and post-hoc rationalizations”. Communicative power thereby influences political decisions and actions. Administrations are concerned with the efficient application of programs – programs which likely did not originate there but were adapted once received. Lifeworld influence, in this case, is much more indirect. Communicative power “can affect the administrative system by cultivating the pool of reasons on which administrative decisions, which are subject to the rule of law, must draw”

(1993:170). Habermas also warns against assuming, on the basis of this dependence, that administrations are simply part of the lifeworld. Dependence upon lifeworld is not, he suggests, equivalent to being (part of) lifeworld.

2.3.4.6 THE INTERCHANGE

As indicated above, the kinds of social order possible within lifeworld and system are different. On the one side, within the socially integrated spheres of lifeworld, actoral intentions (e.g., yes or no decisions) link up interactions. On the other side, within systemically integrated spheres of action, social order develops around action consequences which are functionally interlocked and stabilized (1993:166). The modern social dynamic has crystalized around these orders, thereby setting the boundaries for the individual-society relationship, and for social order and social change. A brief discussion of the interchange between lifeworld and system within the society component of lifeworld follows (see Figure 2.4).

Lifeworld rationalization allows for a displacement of action coordination, from communicatively achieved agreement to actions oriented to success through non-linguistic steering media (money and power). One major consequence has been the separation of "formally organized domains of action" (the economy and the state) from everyday lifeworld experience (1987c:318). These spheres have become "objectified" (1987:318 TCA2) but "complementary" (1987c:343) realities, which now "set their own imperatives against the marginalized lifeworld" (1987c:318;1984b:342). This results in "stylized" (1987c:350) interchange connections between these action contexts, between the lifeworld and media-steered subsystems. Within this interchange nexus, subsystem imperatives (e.g., monetarization and bureaucratization) penetrate lifeworld contexts through "two steering media and four channels" (1987c:343). On the one hand, the interchange occurs through the media money and power. On the other hand, it is anchored or institutionalized in the lifeworld through four roles: employee and consumer, and citizen and client (1987c:319,395).

Concomitant with the differentiation and development of the two media steered subsystems (capitalism and the bureaucratic administration), within which

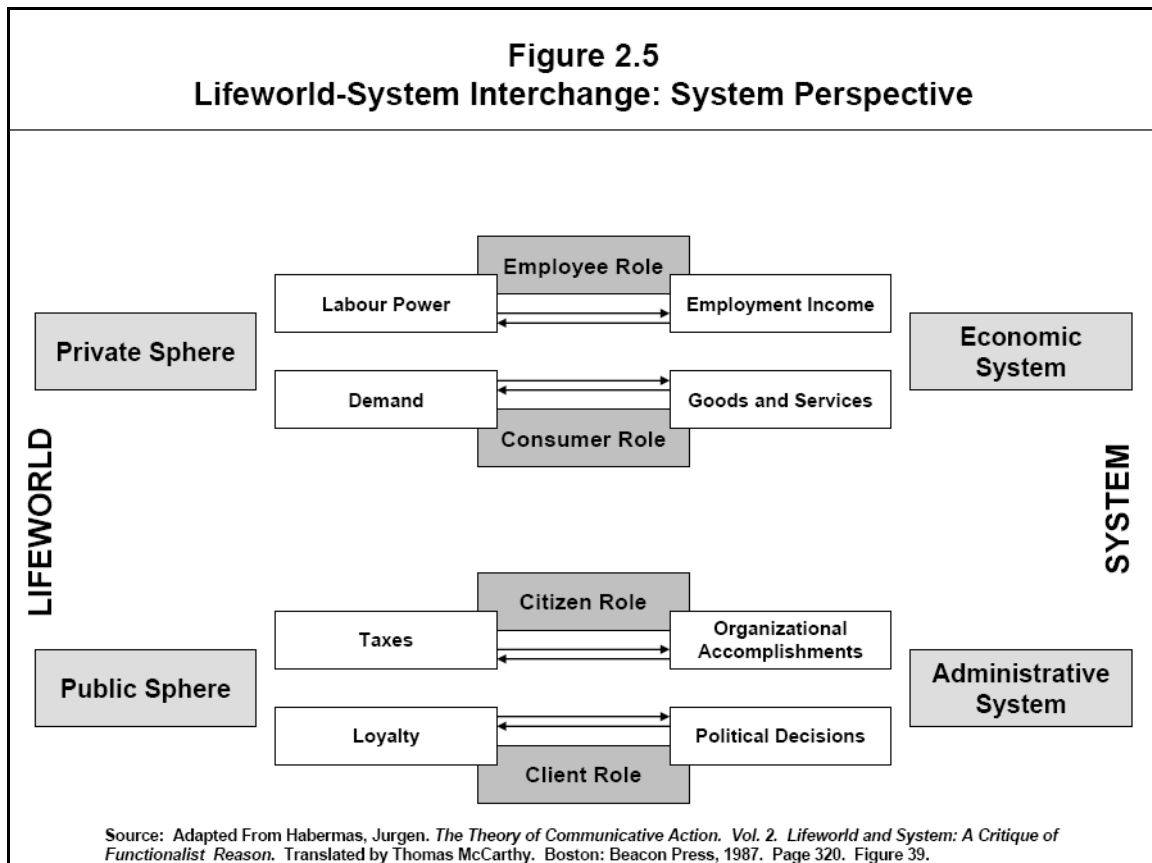
interactions are functionally integrated, two "socially integrated areas of action" develop within the lifeworld (1987c:318-319; 1984b:341). One is a private sphere centered in the nuclear family (e.g., also neighborhoods, voluntary associations; 1987c:310) which is specialized in socialization and oriented to consumption. The other is a public sphere centered in a communicative network aimed at cultural reproduction and social integration (1987c:318-319). Relieved of its traditional "productive functions", and viewed from the systemic perspective of the economy, the institutional core of the nuclear family is seen as "the environment of *private households*". And, viewed from a systemic perspective of the state, the institutional core of the communicative network is regarded as "the environment relevant to *generating legitimation*". Systemic imperatives work to functionally coordinate both of these action environments. However, only the state seeks to legitimate itself within the "cultural and political" public spheres (1987c:319).

Viewed systemically, the "interchange relations" between these four "contiguous" (1987c:319) spheres (private and public, and economy and state; see Figure 2.5) are described by Habermas as follows:

The economic system exchanges wages against labor (as an input factor), as well as goods and services (as the output of its own products) against consumer demand. The public administration exchanges organizational performance for taxes (as an input factor), as well as political decisions (as the output of its own products) for mass loyalty. (1987c:319)

Viewed from a lifeworld perspective, four social roles evolve out of this interchange: the employee, the consumer, the client and the citizen (1987c:319). Since the private and public spheres of lifeworld are "communicatively structured", lifeworld-system interchange relations necessarily revolve around the two steering media (money, power) being anchored within the lifeworld (1987c:319). Social relations can be regulated by money and power "only to the extent that the products of the lifeworld have been *abstracted, in a manner suitable to the medium in question*, into input factors for the corresponding subsystem, which can relate to its environment only via its own medium" (1987c:322). Processes of abstraction occur when the

lifeworld, in its interchanges with autonomous subsystems, conforms to steering media: for instance, when labour power is commodified and valorized (1987c:322).



On the one hand, employee and client roles are legally constituted and organizationally bound (1987c:319,321). In assuming these roles, social actors adapt themselves to formally organized domains of action by making "organization specific contribution[s]" such as labour power or expertise, and through receiving contingent compensations such as wages and salaries (1987c:319-321). Employee "private life-contexts", contexts of action oriented toward consensus, are incorporated into the environment of the system (1987c:308, 310). Therefore, participants' "value orientations", "performances" and "motivations" are objectified as "contributions" to the organization; they become "raw material" for functional needs and imperatives (1987c:308, 309). From an action perspective, "persons"

become part of a functionally or strategically coordinated environment (1987c:336). To the extent that everyday communicative practices lose the ability to coordinate and reproduce these core domains of lifeworld, pathological consequences can develop.

Consumer and citizen roles, on the other hand, are less organizationally dependent. According to Habermas, these roles originate with "prior self-formative processes in which preferences, value orientations, attitudes, and so forth have [already] taken shape" (1987d:321). Their stronger ties to the lifeworld mean they are not defined externally in the same way as are employee and client roles (1987d:321). Because of their lifeworld ties, these roles, he argues "cannot be taken over economically or politically as can abstract quantities of labor power and taxes" (1987d:321-322, also 367). They cannot be "'bought'" (as can labour power) via the economy or "'collected'" (as can taxes) via the state (1987c:22; see also 1987a:363).

With the normalization of occupational roles within the modern welfare state, the "burdens" developing from waged employment are mitigated through "'humanizing' the workplace", through "monetary rewards" and through "legally guaranteed securities" (1987c:349). Because the proletarian features of the employee role are alleviated through the "continuous rise in the standard of living", that is through consumption, the family (the private sphere) is sheltered from system imperatives (1987c:349). Problems and conflicts surrounding distribution therefore "lose their explosive power" (1987c:349-350).

In parallel fashion, the role of citizen has also been neutralized. With the "universalization" of the citizen role, and with its separation "from the decision making process", citizens' political participation is limited. The welfare state compensates citizens for this neutralization in the form of "use values", realizable, for instance, when citizens become clients of the welfare-state (1987c:350). In other words, the client role makes the illusion of political participation tolerable. As Habermas summarizes, just as the "burdens of normalizing alienated labour are passed off onto the consumer role", the "negative side effects of institutionalizing

an alienated mode of having a say in matters of public interest are passed off onto the client role" (1987c:350).

Through the "welfare state compromise" (1987c:349), a "new equilibrium" (1987c:350) develops around the consumer and client roles. The flow of compensations from the subsystems to the lifeworld context, which tends to pacify social labour and neutralize political participation (1987c:350,351), redefines "socially integrated contexts of life" into consumer and client roles (1987c:351). Everyday life-contexts become system environments. Consequently, private households "have been converted over to mass consumption", and client relations are now "coordinated with bureaucratic provisions for life" (1987c:351). However, while the intention underlying the provisions of compensations such as 'clientization', is social integration, "life-relations" tend to break apart through "legalized social intervention" (1987c:364). According to this example, life-relations become disconnected from "consensual mechanisms that coordinate action" (1987c:364). Under these conditions, social action is no longer coordinated through mutual understanding and consensus; rather, it is functionally organized.

Habermas suggests that the "functional ties" undergirding the linkage between lifeworld and system become visible as everyday communicative contexts are monetarized and bureaucratized. These media generated functional ties become visible when lifeworld "goals", "life-spaces" and "life-times" become monetarized, and when "duties", "responsibilities" and "dependencies" are bureaucratized (1987c:322). This intrusion into the lifeworld has a colonizing effect on everyday life. A process Habermas labels "the colonization of the lifeworld" develops when the "destruction of traditional forms of life" cannot be balanced through "effectively fulfilling the functions of society as a whole" (1987c:322). Autonomous subsystem imperatives, "like colonial masters coming into a tribal society", penetrate the lifeworld and systematically assimilate it, to its own needs and demands (1987c:355).

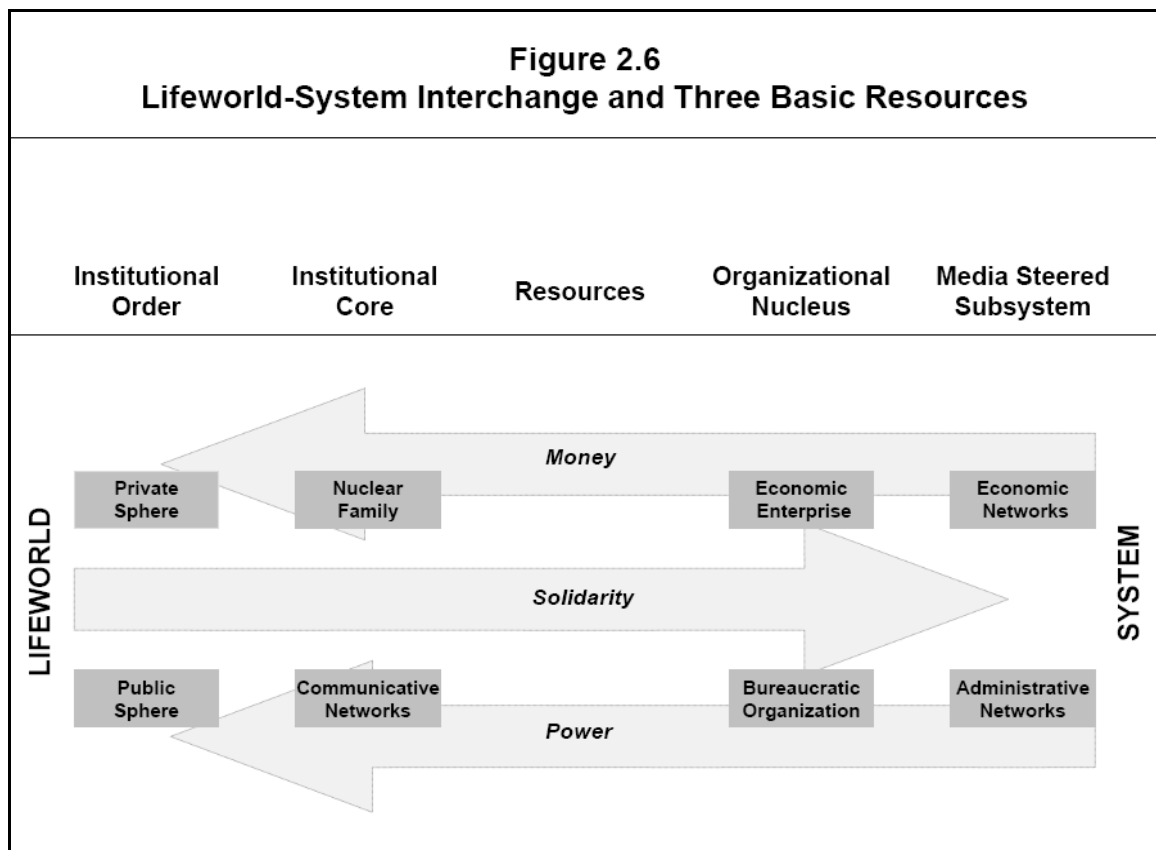
Habermas' "thesis of internal colonization" suggests that, as capitalism continues to expand, the economy and state "become more and more complex" and

"penetrate ever deeper into the symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld" (1987c:367). For example, family has progressively "adapted to the imperatives of the employment system" (1987c:368). This colonizing trend, Habermas asserts, extends to many other areas of social life. For instance, "leisure, culture, recreation, and tourism" are increasingly governed by a "commodity economy" and by "mass consumption". However, this trend stands in sharp contrast to his claim that lifeworld rationalization has also created an emancipatory potential, within social life generally, and family specifically. In regards to the latter, Habermas contends that modern families have increased opportunities for egalitarian relationships, individuated interaction and liberalized child-rearing (1987c:387). There is, therefore, both a promise and a paradox at work in modern social life, "at the same time" (1987c:403).

Habermas believes that a "collectively better and less threatened way of life" is possible only if the three resources available for steering in modern society – money, power and solidarity – are "brought into a new balance" (1989a:296). Figure 2.6 situates these three resources within the lifeworld-system interchange model presented above. (Figure 3.1 expands this model.) He proposes that self-organized (lifeworld) public spheres can influence the state and, therefore, indirectly the economy, given the state's "sensitivity" to input from its environment(s). Because subsystems are closed to "direct interventions", that is, since they 'listen' to their own language or medium of reproduction (money, power), Habermas proffers a "model of boundary conflicts" organized on the basis of indirect influence (1987a:365).

Since media-steered subsystem imperatives permeate communicatively ordered action contexts through the society component of the lifeworld, Habermas feels a "new division of powers" or a new alignment within this dimension is necessary (1987a:364). Fundamental to this realignment is the development of interconnected, self-governing, self-organizing, communicatively structured spheres of the lifeworld (1989a:297). These collectivities, these "autonomous public spheres" (1989a:298), would be the source of a "socially integrating power"

(solidarity) necessary to "sensitize the self-steering mechanisms of the state and the economy" (1987a:364,365). A socially integrating power, also referred to as communicative power (see Figure 3.1), should be able to sensitize system regarding lifeworld concerns, needs, goals and aspirations. To influence system, Habermas argues, a lifeworld generated communicative power must develop at the boundary and interchange between private and public lifeworld spheres, as well as between lifeworld and the two subsystems, the economy and the state (1989a:296). He writes that "[t]he socially integrating power of solidarity would have to be in a position to assert itself against the systemically integrating steering media of money and power" (1987a:364).



The "systemic spell" ordering everyday life, through labour-wage or legitimation-service exchanges for instance, can only be broken by systemic-influencing "impulses" originating in the lifeworld (1987a:364). Systems "learning

to function better" or increasing system complexity will not release the "normative content of modernity" which is "stored in rationalized lifeworlds" (1987a:366). Habermas is careful to point out that the lifeworld-system model of interchange and model of boundary conflicts does not delimit lifeworld's emancipatory potential. Lifeworld colonization and democratic governance are both "equally legitimate analytic perspectives" (1993:171). In fact, he argues that "[t]he question as to which side imposes limitations ... must be treated as an empirical [question]" (1993:171). This research is concerned with situating this question at the heart of the lifeworld, within family.

Social modernization has been ambiguous in its developments. Because modernity may not be 'peeled off', so to speak, a critical theory of society must be able to explain this ambiguity. While increasing social complexity is paradoxical, it does not mean pathological effects will inevitably develop in everyday life. On one side, as "exchange relations" and "bureaucratic regulation" invade lifeworld's "communicative core areas" (e.g., family), social pathologies can become quite pronounced. These pathologies are manifested in the loss of meaning, the dissolution of stable relationships and the inability to act responsibly. Since participants rely on background resources such as what we know, on whom to depend and how to cope, communicative practices can become severely restricted. On the other side, relative stability between lifeworld and system can produce a wider "range of options and learning capacities" (2001c:153-154). Stability, though, does not preclude fallibility or change. Thus, the nature of the "division of labor between the three forces" (2001c:154) – solidarity on the one hand, money and power on the other hand – has important implications for everyday life.

Traditionally, solidarity (bonds of oneness) flowed out of "inherited values and norms" and "established and standardized communicative patterns". However, this "ascriptive background" has been shattered by lifeworld rationalization. Social actors must now rely on their own "interpretive accomplishments" for creating, as needed, "new bonds and normative arrangements". Solidarity is achieved through the "productive force" of our communicative practices (2001c:154). While lifeworld

rationalization has created the potential for new forms of solidarity, system rationalization has resulted in a greater capacity for the functional integration and organization of social life (see above). Given the apparent mutual interdependence between lifeworld and system (2001c:153), the issue of balancing the three available resources is extremely important.

What is needed is a “stereoscopic view” which critically apprehends both the “emancipating, unburdening effects” of lifeworld’s “communicative rationalization” and the pathological effects of “a functionalist reason run wild” (2001c:156). Habermas’ theory of rationalization (e.g., system rationalization and lifeworld rationalization) goes a long way towards meeting this need. Using rationalization as a guiding theme for analyzing the social action – social order – social change dynamic within the lifeworld-system interchange, modern social life seems ambiguous, if not precarious. The importance of effective influence upon and governance over functionalist reason seems obvious. Lifeworld rationalization indicates that the discursive practices within everyday communicative sociation may provide the normative resources for emancipatory energies to develop. The next section examines Habermas’ theory of communicative action in order to flesh out his understanding of the rational communicative potential of everyday communicative practices. It is here that the voice of reason becomes visible.

2.3.5 COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

2.3.5.1 INTRODUCTION

Habermas suggests that lifeworld rationalization and a decentered understanding of the world are two “necessary conditions” for developing “an emancipated society” (1984b:74). On the one hand, a decentered understanding allows social actors to take a critical and reflective approach toward different dimensions of life-experience (e.g., cultural traditions, social relationships, and identity). As a result, egocentric and ethnocentric approaches to these life-experiences are destabilized. On the other hand, lifeworld rationalization signifies the structural differentiation of culture, society and personality from a traditional and unified complex of taken for granted certainties. These three structures comprise

the lifeworld background which functions as a resource within, and a stabilizing context for, our everyday discursive practices. Interpretive accomplishments and ways of understanding (culture), relational dependencies and community formations (society), and motivational patterns, attitudes and competencies (personality) have all become subject to a discursive practice in which participants are responsible for their own (interpretive) actions. The dependence of societal rationalization (both social and system) upon a decentering process will be discussed only indirectly. The focus in this section is upon the importance of communicative action and the lifeworld background for our everyday social practices.

Social practices are characterized, by Habermas, as “an ever more extensive and ever more finely woven net of linguistically generated intersubjectivity” (1987a:346). As the lifeworld background becomes differentiated (culture, society, person), the “floating web of intersubjective threads” becomes increasingly responsible for holding lifeworld components together (1987a:346), communicatively. Lifeworld rationalization, therefore, can be understood as “the unfolding of the rational potential of social practice” (1987a:345), or more specifically, as the “the rational potential of action oriented toward reaching understanding” (1987a:346). Habermas has also described this rationalization process in terms of detraditionalization (2003b:26; 1992b:194f).

The “detraditionalization of lifeworlds” lays bare the secularized, reflective, and regenerative resources – “the communicative resources of lifeworlds” – necessary for morally integrating pluralistic and functionally differentiated social formations (2003b:26). Traditionally, individual biographies were fixed within a historically constituted “social stratum”, and were bound to an established, socio-cultural “constellation” of “birth, family, marital partner, career, and political position”. Individual biographies, as well as traditional forms of life, were to a large extent ascribed. They were “normatively bundled”. With detraditionalization, the options for choice have been expanded, extensively. The socio-cultural milieu no longer “relieves” individuals of basic biographic or life-plan decisions. Individuals have become responsible for their own action “coordinative and integrative

performances". For example, decisions regarding education, career, marriage (and divorce) and children are made as individuals plan their life-projects cooperatively with others (1992b:195). Decision making processes, of course, are intersubjectively embedded within networks of everyday communicative practices. And, these discursive practices are dependent upon available background (lifeworld) resources.

Everyday communicative practices, therefore, hold an emancipatory potential, for individuals, for families, for societies, and, so it is hoped, for global society. However, as Habermas explains in one interview, he avoids using terms such as emancipation, especially in reference to collectives or societies. He focuses upon concepts such as "reaching understanding" and "communicative action", which, he points out, have "a more trivial" and everyday significance. They capture what happens "constantly in everyday practice" (1994b: 104). He also prefers to talk about "the undisable subject", an idea which is reflected within the "necessary conditions for reaching understanding" (1994b:112). For example, within communicative interaction, an undisable subject is a participant who freely and fully participates in consensus formation. Nevertheless, and with this proviso in mind, the concept emancipation is utilized here, to reflect the potential for change within the modern social dynamic.

Habermas' theory of communicative action provides an explanation for the development of an "intersubjectively shared social order" (Cooke 1998:8). Social integration, not functional integration, best explains the conditions for consensually based social interactions and social formations. Communicative action is based on a theory of action which explains not only how social order is possible, but the nature of the individual-society relationship as well. An analysis of communicative action establishes the framework for understanding how individuals link-up their interactions through reaching understanding. It also reveals the lifeworld – the background for everyday discursive practices – as both a necessary resource and a stabilizing force for social action. The rational potential for our everyday communicative practices depends upon this background. If (social) philosophy is to be considered the guardian of rationality, what is this rationality that it guards?

Several points are highlighted below.

2.3.5.2 OBSERVATIONS

Rationality has to do with sensibility (good sense), sound judgement and openness to reasoning. It is in this sense that Habermas describes rationality as “a limit concept with normative content” (1992b:136). And, reflecting his concern with action coordination and problemsolving potentials, he maintains that rationality is “linguistically embodied” (1992b:142). More specifically, he depicts the “locus”, or the home, of rationality as being the illocutionary act (1998c:294; 1992b:75) of communicating something, about something, to someone. What this means is that whenever we say something we are oriented toward cooperative meaning making: understanding and agreement (1998c:201-205). While knowledge (about something) is important, Habermas’ emphasis is upon how knowledge is *used* by competent actors and speakers (1998c:219) within ordinary language (speech). To focus only on knowledge misses experiences relating to action and speech, or to the entwinement of all three (knowledge, action, speech) within our daily discursive practices.

When we communicate something about the world, we use language to disclose our beliefs, our expectations and our intentions and experiences. We use intelligible utterances to make claims about the world (1993:136). Essentially, a speaker’s validity claim is an “assertion that the conditions for the validity of an utterance are fulfilled” (1984b:38). Hearers can only accept, reject or abstain for the moment. Acceptance of the claim means the hearer agrees with the reason(s) proffered. Most often, validity claims are implicitly accepted within our everyday talking (communicative action) through shared background (lifeworld) resources. These claims become explicit issues when there is “disagreement or persistent problematization” (1990:136-137). Participants can engage in argumentation in order to resolve these disagreements, through reaching consensus about good reason(s) for the claim.

Habermas refers to these validity claims as “stewards” of rationality (1992b:74). Language, with its world disclosing ability, is the medium in which

validity claims are proffered, contested and resolved. World disclosure (within language) interacts with inner learning processes within the everyday practices of reaching understanding. It is here that knowledge of the world is “acquired and expanded” and interpretively revised. Language therefore enables “rational behavior”; it is not, of itself, ‘rational’ (1998c:335-337). The following comments are intended to provide some insight into how rationality inheres our everyday communicative practices and what rationality, especially communicative rationality, means for the social action – social order – social change dynamic.

First, at an elemental level, Habermas applies rationality to “goal-directed” activity. The core structure of all action is its purposive, goal-directed nature. When used in reference to the communicative (linguistic) actions of individual social actors, this goal-directed action become “problem-solving action” (1984b:12). And, what holds for individuals holds also for collectives, though derivatively. Within the context of increasingly complex societies, the capacity for “unconstrained coordination of actions and consensual resolution of conflicts” increases in proportion to expanded opportunities for communicative rationality (1984b:15). Communicative rationality, however, resides in social actions which are based, especially within discourse, on “good reasons or grounds” (1984b:22).

Second, good reasons form the basis of “common convictions” (1998c:120), and are crucial to cooperative and consensual actions. Reaching understanding means “at least two subjects capable of speech and action [and knowledge] understand a linguistic expression in an identical way” (1998c:142). They accept the same reasons for holding a belief, behaving in a particular way, or maintaining specific attitudes.

Third, argumentation becomes a “court of appeal” for resolving contested issues consensually. Argumentation allows communicative action to continue, without the use of influence or force (1984b:18-19). When pursued unreservedly, the unforced force of the better argument should prevail. Habermas makes a methodological distinction here. While an openness to “criticism and grounding” merely “*points*” to argumentation, learning processes “rely” on it (1984b:22). Action

is rational when actors learn from dealing with their problems and mistakes. Thus, solutions to problems which are generated through reaching agreement (about validity claims and good reasons) can be evaluated as learning processes (1984b:66).

Fourth, Habermas suggests that complex concepts such as “socio-cultural lifeworld” (1984b:108), “action coordination” and “social interaction” (1998c:220) may be analyzed through “fundamental” (1984b:108) or “elemental” concepts such as knowledge, action and speech (1998c:307ff; 1998c:220). Knowledge, action and speech are the core structures of rationality, or “roots of rationality”. Each has its own rational nature: knowledge is propositional; action is intentional; and speech is communicative and intersubjective. None of these forms of rationality (propositional, intentional, communicative) is “*overarching*”. However, discursive rationality, which flows out of communicative rationality, interconnects these three core structures. Even so, the “justificatory rationality” of argumentative practices is dependent (“to a certain extent”) on the communicative rationality “embodied in everyday action”. Habermas refers to the “integrative role” of discursive rationality as the basis of a “model of *intermeshed* core structures” (1998c:309).

(a) Knowledge is linguistic because it is propositional; and, it is fallible because it is represented in language. Given its propositional nature, it can therefore be either true or false. For beliefs to be rational there must be good reasons for them, within a given context. In other words, we know something when we know why it is true (1998c:311-313). (b) Action is intentional. Thus, it is teleological or goal oriented. Accordingly, an action is rational if it is successfully achieved using “deliberately selected and implemented” means. Successful actions are rational when the actor understands the reasons for success and that these reasons motivated the action. Action intentions and calculations of success become the justifications for purposive-rational action. Social actors behave egocentrically (or ethnocentrically) when engaging in purposive-rational action (1998c:313-315).

(c) Speaking, or speech, involves social actors employing or using expressions or utterances. By using language communicatively (e.g., an illocutionary action), actors represent facts, establish relationships, and express intentions, at once. Speaking is rational because of the binding nature of (communicatively) consensually reaching understanding, “about something” “with someone”. This binding or “unifying force” establishes an “intersubjectively shared lifeworld” which, in turn, becomes a common reference system within communicative processes. Thus, to be rational, speech acts must be “comprehensible and acceptable” (1998c:315-317).

Fifth, because rationality has to do with how speaking and acting individuals “use knowledge”, versus the possession of it (1998c:219), speech has a rational potential for coordinating our activities. In this regard, Habermas is concerned with communicative rationality. When the linguistic or communicative use of language is oriented to reaching understanding, it engenders a “unifying force” capable of rationally binding participants in their actions, of coordinating actions consensually (1998c:315). As such, communicative rationality is dependent upon a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ position taken with respect to a “spectrum” of validity claims (1998c:188). Agreement achieved through reaching understanding, as well as the action coordination issuing from that accord, is based on “rationally motivated assent”; “it cannot be imposed” (1998c:120). Thus, for Habermas, rationality resides within our discursive practices.

Sixth, Habermas speaks of rationality or reason on a number of different levels. An *individual* is rational to the extent she can talk coherently, “account” for her speech “reflectively” (1998c:310, 311; 1984b:20), and therefore consensually coordinate her interactions. This reflective capacity makes distancing oneself from cultural traditions, from normative certainties, and from established identities possible. Distancing or decentering means that self or subjectivity becomes unbounded (1998c:412), autonomous and accountable. Within everyday life a decentered, reflective capacity becomes the basis for three different freedoms: a reflexive freedom from egocentrism; a freedom of choice for selecting options for

commitments; and an ethical freedom for planning a life-project (1998c:311; 1984b:18ff). These freedoms are an essential prerequisite for participating in consensus oriented actions or action networks. Of course, complete freedom is rarely experienced. A decentered freedom enables participants to cooperatively and consensually (communicatively) resolve action coordinating problems. For example, decentered freedom within the family means that who walks the dog, washes the clothes or changes the diapers *can be* decided consensually (without influence).

In a similar manner, a *form of life* (e.g., the ways of understanding, the institutional complexes, the identity formations) is rational if it generates problemsolving capacities (1998c:310, 335). However, forms of life are rational only *indirectly*. “[T]raditions”, “institutions”, “customs”, and “competencies” provide the (“congenial”) background within which communicative practices and “reflexive capacities” develop. In turn, these problemsolving capacities “enable rational beliefs, actions, and communication” (1998c:335). If societal rationalization is understood as “the rational potential of social practice” (e.g., for problemsolving), then societies are also rational to the extent language and reaching understanding are utilized as an action coordinating mechanism (1998c:188). The more ‘congenial’ the background (e.g., democratic), it seems, the more potential for solving problems consensually (rationally). Language therefore enables rational behavior (1998c:335).

Seventh, the lifeworld background, which is linguistically “articulated” (1998c:335, and 336), also enables society’s rational potential. Habermas states that, “the lifeworld, which is itself articulated in the medium of language, opens up for its members an interpretive horizon for everything that they experience in the world, about which they reach understanding, and from which they can learn” (1998c:335). Individuals’, and therefore society’s, interpretive capacities and learning potentials are dependent upon this linguistically constituted background.

Eighth, the linguistic disclosure of the world has a “complementary relationship” with the “rational accomplishments” of individuals who are both

“fallible” and “capable of learning” (1998c:337). It is only by way of these rational accomplishments that a world (in all its dimensions) can be disclosed, and changed. Furthermore, linguistic world disclosure and learning processes interact, in a “circular process”, within the everyday “practices of reaching understanding”. They meet within a shared lifeworld, within lifeworld horizons thematized by the demands of new experiences and problems (1998c:336).

Finally, rationality, for Habermas, is procedural in nature, and not to be “read off” of material contents. It is bound up with the “validity of results”, not the results themselves. Existing or future life-projects or life-orders are not rational; only procedurally successful problem-solving practices are rational (1992b:35).

2.3.5.3 COMMUNICATIVE ACTION AND STRATEGIC ACTION

2.3.5.3.1 Introduction How can language be understood as a mechanism for mediating the interactions between social actors and for problemsolving? A theory of social action must account for how actors intersubjectively orient themselves, communicatively, to coordinate their interactions. This is an important element since Habermas’ theory of communicative action is also intended “to explain how social order is possible” (1998c:27).

When social actors interconnect their action plans in order to resolve a problem or meet a need, the result is an “interaction”. Interactions allow issues and actions to “interlock” within “social spaces and historical time” by limiting contingent choices (1998c:221). At a base level, all action is teleological. Action is intentional. Its purpose is to realize some goal, some desired end (1998c:313). Within teleological action, plans of action are established and carried out on the basis of situation interpretations. A solitary actor, for example, assesses the action situation and orients her action plan according to relevant options and prospects for success. However, when plans of action can only be achieved “interactively”, that is, with the help of another or others, how to coordinate interaction becomes an issue (1998c:221).

Habermas argues that actors linguistically coordinate their interactions by engaging in either strategic action or communicative action. Where strategic action

employs language to transmit information, communicative action uses language for social integration. Within strategic action, interactions are coordinated by means of influence. One or all of the actors will try to use influence to achieve specific goals. In communicative action, the action coordinating effect comes from the “consensus achieving force of linguistic processes of *reaching understanding*” – from the “binding and bonding energies of *language*” (1998c:221).

Strategic and communicative actions do share some common features. In both cases social actors have the capacity to set goals and to engage in goal directed actions. As well, actors desire to achieve a plan of action (1984b:101; 1998c:203). Another common feature is the “double contingency” typical of all communicative engagements (1998c:204). Social actors have the “freedom of choice”, to agree or not to agree. But decision making is effected differently in each case: by influence within strategic action, and by reaching understanding within communicative action.

2.3.5.3.2 Strategic Action Individuals acting strategically coordinate action plans by exerting influence upon one another. Language use, therefore, is oriented toward “consequences” or effects (perlocutions), and not toward communicatively achieved agreement (1984b:289; 1998c:326). These effects can be intentional, in the sense just described, or “trivial”, in the sense of unforeseen side effects (1984b:289). (See the bottom row of Figure 2.8.) In acting strategically, individuals treat each other objectively. Strategic action requires only that communicative roles be undertaken from the third person perspective. Interestingly, these speaker-hearer roles reflect a subject-other relational dimension, in that the ‘other’ does not (directly) become part of the communicative process. In communicative action, a subject-subject relational dimension is established. Strategic action suspends the performative attitude, an attitude which demands communicative participants use the first and second person perspectives (1998c:332, 326).

Habermas is quite clear that language mediates all social actions, including strategic actions: “even strategic interactions require demanding feats of understanding and interpretations” (1998c:205-206). Although illocutionary aims

are pursued within strategic action, they are not undertaken unreservedly. Actors use the illocutionary aim of reaching understanding in order to achieve a successful outcome. Because, in strategic action, participants only feed parasitically upon language oriented to understanding, the illocutionary force of language is not utilized. Speech acts are “robbed of their illocutionary binding and bonding power”. Strategic actors are not oriented to reaching consensus. Hence, they are not rationally motivated. Within strategic action actors do not agree to the same reasons. Of course, in order for participants to carry out their intended actions, they must understand each other. Nevertheless, common linguistic knowledge is used only “indirectly”, in order to achieve success. Social actors reciprocally assume that individual decisions are “based on beliefs” which are held “to be true”. These beliefs are, Habermas points out, only “truth values” and not “truth claims”. Truth values reflect “personal preferences and goals” (1998c:332-333).

Truth values remain in the background and are not open to “discursive vindication”. Habermas uses the “proverbial shot across the bow” from the Cuban missile crisis as an example of the use of influence to coordinate actions (1998c:333). Another example might be a husband, who, in a heated argument with his wife, raises his hand in a strike position. The roles, attitudes and consequences reflected in these examples are obvious. In contradistinction, within communicative action “truth claims” are raised “publicly” and discursively, with the aim of arriving at “intersubjective recognition” and, ultimately, agreement (1998c:333). Agreement is strikingly absent in the two examples above.

As basic forms of social action, strategic and communicative action differ in a number of ways. Strategic action is connected to power, influence and coercion (1984b:145), while communicative action requires the binding and bonding capacities of reaching agreement. Whereas in strategic action achieving success through influence or coercion is the means of coordinating actions, in communicative action the coordination of action is achieved through a communicatively achieved agreement, pursued “without reservation” (1998c:203).

And, where the former is situated within the objective world, the latter is centered (and “linguistically constituted”) in the lifeworld (1998c:204).

As well, these two action types differ in terms of measuring their success. Within strategic action, success, as well as failure, resides in the consequences of the purposive aims or goals. Individual participants are responsible for their own successes. Within communicative action, illocutionary aims are achieved cooperatively (1998c:204). Responsibility is mutually shared. This means that successful action coordination can be traced to different forms of rationality: “purposive rationality of action orientations” within strategic action; and communicative rationality manifested within “the conditions for a communicatively achieved agreement” (1998c:300). From the perspective of those involved, these types of action are “mutually exclusive”. You cannot engage in reaching understanding with someone about something and, at the same time, try to influence that person. Or, to put it another way, intersubjective agreement cannot be forced (e.g., by threat, intimidation, deception, suggestion) (1998c:222).

Strategically acting actors encounter each other as “entities” (1998c:204); in striving for their goals, they take an objectivating attitude. By contrast, the illocutionary aim of reaching (understanding and) agreement (1998c:201) is attainable only through consensual and cooperative interaction; actors assume a performative attitude of a participant. Reaching agreement is not an individually accessible goal (1998c: 204). The performative attitude is reflective. It allows actors to shift between different worlds of experience and to differentiate between elements within these worlds (Cooke 1994:10-11). This reflective ability is concretized in a (adult) competence to use the full spectrum of validity claims (Cooke 1994:11).

Finally, these two action types are also differentiated in respect to their structural features. Because of the presuppositions necessitated by a performative attitude, social interactions coordinated through reaching understanding involve a “richer and more complex structure” than strategically coordinated interactions (1998c:201-202, 203-205). Presuppositions such as equal respect and reciprocal

consideration clearly distinguish communicative from strategic actions. Within communicative action, presuppositions such as these are “superimposed” upon the teleological structure which underlies all action generally (1998d:205).

2.3.5.3.3 Communicative Action Habermas understands communicative action to be the starting point, or the “fundamental” type of social action. All other forms of action are derivative (1998c:21;1979a:1) or parasitic (1998c:332). (Strategic action is a case in point.) Habermas offers one rather simple definition of communicative action: an “agreement reached communicatively, without reservation” (1998c:203). The communicative basis of reaching agreement through “linguistic acts” has action coordinating power because of the yes/no response to each speech act offer. When an offer is accepted, or a yes position taken, the speech act is considered “worthy of recognition”. Hearers assume, “as a rule”, an obligation for subsequent interactions (1998c:198-199). Habermas’ theory of speech acts, with its focus on validity claims, intersubjectivity and lifeworld background, provides an explanation for how social actors link up their interactions. It also provides a framework for understanding the individual-society relationship, as well as for realizing an emancipatory potential.

Speech act theory is based on the idea that speech, or the “employment of utterances in sentences” (1998c:26), can be analyzed formally in terms of meaning (or of understanding) as a “communicative experience” (1998c:28). Formal analysis of speech acts involves a methodological reconstruction of “concepts”, “meanings”, “rule systems”, “presuppositions”, or, more simply, “*the intuitive knowledge of competent subjects*” (1998c:29). The analysis is concerned with the communicative competence underlying the intersubjective experience of understanding meaning (in utterances) (1998c:29). Communicative competence is the “ability of a speaker oriented toward reaching understanding to embed a well-formed sentence in relations to reality” (1998c:50). Knowledge is expressed and comprehended in this way. Actions are harmonized on the basis of shared values and norms, and intentions are represented and accepted (trusted) (1998c:50).

By using language to represent something, coordinate actions and express intentions, competent actors establish actor-world relations. These three uses or functions of language each refer to different (formal) worlds: an objective world, a social world and a subjective world. The three formal world-concepts provide the basic reference system for criticizable validity claims. These world concepts, however, are not to be confused with the lifeworld background. Habermas summarizes this distinction as follows.

Every consciously enacted process of communication recapitulates, as it were, this differentiation, which has been laboriously acquired in the ontogenesis of the capacity for speech and action. The spheres of things about which we can reach a fallible agreement at a given point become detached from the diffuse background to the lifeworld with its absolute certainties and intuitive presence. As this differentiation progresses, the demarcation becomes ever sharper. On the one side we have the horizon of unquestioned, intersubjectively shared, nonthematized certitudes that participants in communication have 'at their backs.' On the other side, participants in communication face the communicative contents constituted within a world: objects they perceive and manipulate, norms that they observe or violate, and lived experiences to which they have privileged access and which they can express. To the extent to which participants in communication can conceive of what they reach agreement on as something in a world, something detached from the lifeworld background from which it emerged, what is explicitly known comes to be distinguished from what is implicitly certain. (1990:138)

This explicit knowledge is linked with "a potential for reasoning". When actors express this knowledge, it can be criticized. It can be "argued about on the basis of reasons" (1990:138).

Using speech acts, social actors can take up relations with three domains of experience: an objective world as the "totality of facts", a social world as the "totality of all [legitimate] interpersonal relations", and a subjective world as the "totality of experiences to which ... only one individual has privileged access" (1984b:52). In

taking up a relation with each of these worlds, social actors assume basic attitudes towards them. In an objectivating attitude, actors observe and manipulate things, events. In a conformative attitude, actors relate to and create “normative expectations”. And, in an expressive attitude, actors relay feelings, desires, attitudes (1984b:50-52). These formal-pragmatic concepts – objective, social and subjective worlds – become a “reference system” for achieving mutual understanding about something. “[S]peakers and hearers come to an understanding from out of their common lifeworld about something in the objective, social, or subjective worlds” (1987c:126). For a summary of the major concepts relating to communicative action and validity claims see Figure 2.7.

Figure 2.7 Communicative Action and Validity Claims						
Type of Action	Formal-Pragmatic Features					
	Characteristic Speech Acts	Functions of Speech	Action Orientation	Basic Attitudes	Validity Claims	World Relations
Strategic	Perlocutions, Imperatives	Influencing Others	Success	Objectivating	(Effectiveness)	Objective World
Conversation	Constative	Representation Of States of Affairs	Reaching Understanding	Objectivating	Truth	Objective World
Normatively Regulated	Regulatives	Establishment of Interpersonal Affairs	Reaching Understanding	Norm-conformative	Rightness	Social World
Dramaturgical	Expressives	Self-representation	Reaching Understanding	Expressive	Truthfulness	Subjective World
Source: Adapted from Habermas, Jurgen. “Social Action, Purposive Activity, and Communication.” In <i>On the Pragmatics of Communication</i> . Translated by Maeve Cooke. Pages 105-182. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998. Page 165. Table 2.5. Note: Habermas has recently modified his position in respect to reaching understanding. See Figure 2.8.						

Under relatively stable conditions, competent (adult) actors can linguistically represent knowledge of something, produce an interpersonal relationship through

shared values and norms and express (the speaker's) intentions (1998c:50). These three functions of language – to represent something, to establish legitimate relationships, to express something – are “equiprimordial” (1998c:228), pragmatically embedded within social experience, and analyzable through the validity claims within which they are expressed. Successful speech acts, which result in consensual interactions, are conditioned by communicative participants' desire to raise redeemable validity claims and to reach understanding through these claims (1998c:53). Conditions such as these are vitally important to processes of communicative action and consensual action coordination.

Speech acts, through the three functions mentioned above, become the focal point of intersubjective recognition and agreement, “by all those involved” (1998c:232). Pragmatically, this means that a speaker makes a “speech-act offer” to which a hearer can take a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ position (1998c:232). Importantly, agreement requires a hearer “to hold the *same* view” as the speaker, and not simply understand a speaker's “belief” or “intention” (1998c:320). Habermas refers to illocutionary acts (speech acts) as the “structural” “locus of rationality”, in which validity conditions (e.g., participation), validity claims (e.g., actor-world relations) and reasons (e.g., supporting the claims) are interconnected. Meaning and validity are internally connected: “We understand a speech act ... when we know what makes it acceptable” (1998c:232; also 339ff). What makes a speech act acceptable is understanding the “kinds of reasons” which could be used to support (convince someone about) a validity claim. If a hearer agrees with the reasons, which are implicitly raised in everyday communicative practices and explicitly contested in argumentation, then the yes response obliges participants to coordinate subsequent actions (1998c:233). Furthermore, the reasons which can make a speech act acceptable are drawn from a “reservoir” (1998c:232) of potential reasons – lifeworld backgrounds – to which all participants have access. Agreement, of course, will rest on sufficiently overlapping lifeworld backgrounds from which these reasons are derived.

Understanding speech acts involves knowing which reasons could “vindicate” the validity claims proffered (1998c:340). Good reasons can be actor-relative, resulting in weak communicative action, or actor-independent, producing strong communicative action (1998c:325, 326). Within weak communicative action the hearer has only to understand the speaker has “good-reasons-for-the-given-actor” (for the speaker), within specific circumstances and given personal preferences (1998c:340, 321). And, given the hearer’s own preferences and circumstances, the reason(s) do not have to be made her own. In this case, reaching understanding involves “facts” (truth claims) and “actor-relative reasons for one-sided expressions of will” (truthfulness claims) (1998c:326). While claims to truth and truthfulness are relevant for weak communicative action, strong communicative action also requires claims of rightness (1998c:326-327). (Note: Action is rational when reasons bind will, or bind the disposition or power to act.)

Within strong communicative action, actor independent (e.g., normative) reasons are the basis for binding wills, and for reciprocal expectations and obligations – not for subjective and arbitrary actions (1998c:324-325). Reaching understanding involves an orientation, characterized by shared values and norms, which is capable of binding wills (rightness claims), an orientation stronger than “personal preferences”. In this instance, “normative insights” guide participants’ autonomous actions. Participants’ “wills” are bound by “intersubjectively shared value orientations”. Obligations for continued action, for cooperatively coordinating interactions, are grounded in a “shared” social world (1998c:328).

Habermas makes a fine distinction regarding action coordination possibilities based on reasons used and accepted by participants engaged in communicative action. On the one hand, actors reach understanding (weak sense) when one participant understands that another participant has good reasons (“in the light of her preferences”) for her position or intention, yet does not accept those reasons (“in the light of his preferences”) (1998c:321). On the other hand, agreement (strong sense) occurs when actors accept the *same* reasons for a validity claim (see Figure 2.8).

FIGURE 2.8 TYPES OF ACTION, MODES OF LANGUAGE USE AND ACTORAL ATTITUDES			
	Modes of Language Use	Types of Action/Actor's Attitude	
		Objectivating	Performative
Nonsocial Action	Noncommunicative	Intentional Action	<hr/>
Social Interactions	Oriented toward Reaching Understanding	<hr/>	Weak Communicative Action
	Oriented toward Agreement	<hr/>	Strong Communicative Action
	Oriented toward Consequences	Strategic Interaction	<hr/>
<small>Source: Habermas, Jurgen. "Some Further Clarifications of the Concept of Communicative Rationality." in <i>On the Pragmatics of Communication</i>. Translated by Maeve Cooke. Pages 307-342. Cambridge Massachusetts: The MIT Press. Page 334.</small>			

Speech acts have a binding and bonding force capable of coordinating actions. The illocutionary force of speech acts can, Habermas states, "arouse convictions and bring about 'connections'". He identifies two "stringent" conditions which enable this action coordinating force: the cooperative development of plans of action based on a common understanding ("interpretation") of the situation; and the pursuit of reaching understanding "without reservation" (1998c:222). For actions to be coordinated linguistically, without force, there must be a common understanding of a problem situation, and an agreement regarding the reasons for the action which follows.

The binding-bonding force of speech acts flows out of the speaker's warranty to provide the "right sort of reasons" in order to redeem a questioned validity claim (1998c:222). And, when a validity claim has been accepted, a speech act is capable of coordinating actions because the binding-bonding force extends to any

subsequent “sequel of interaction”. Acceptance generally means a hearer will assume “obligations” for those successive interactions. For example, when a command is accepted, there is an obligation to fulfill it; when a promise is made, there is an obligation to keep it; and, when an assertion is accepted, there is an obligation to conduct behavior on that basis (1998c:223). These communicative acts, therefore, become a mechanism for action coordination (1998c:198-199). Significantly, the “commonality” generated by the “intersubjective recognition” of claims creates the “basis” for a solidarity (for “bonds”) which participants use to “shape subsequent behavior” (2003d:129).

Action coordination, however, is contingent upon an intersubjectively shared and recognized lifeworld background which functions as a “reservoir” for shared reasons (1998c:235). One has to know the normative background, for instance, in order to accept a norm as normative. The relevant reasons for all validity claims are drawn from this reservoir. Habermas points out that good reasons should not be confused with “life-habits”, which have only contingent social currency. Life-habits are present in some background contexts while missing in others. He also notes that all understandings and agreements which have become part of the background reservoir are fallible or open to challenge (1998c:406).

Habermas refers to the binding force of speech acts for action coordination as “*speech-act typical obligations*”. These obligations can be distinguished according to whether speech acts are institutionally bound or institutionally unbound. The former indicates contexts in which “established norms of action” create the binding force for subsequent actions (e.g., “betting”, “christening”). The latter points to situations where the normative background does not “directly” supply binding energies (e.g., “commands”, “advice”) (1998c:85; 60-61). In this case, an illocutionary force comes into effect only when a participant (or participants) takes a yes/no position to the validity claim raised within the speech act. The yes/no response, which is based on reasons, becomes the “rational basis” of the binding and bonding relationships (1998c:85).

Communicative action has a “rational infrastructure” based on reasons or grounds which can be called upon in response to challenges to proffered validity claims. Success depends upon participants’ yes or no position with respect to those claims (1984b:106), and not upon influence or coercion. Consensus becomes the basis for continued interactions. The “binding effect” is ironic, Habermas contends, because participants *can* say ‘no’. Although participants can reject a speech act offer, they can do so only for good reasons, and not arbitrarily (1987c:73-74). Importantly, the rational infrastructure of communicative action (e.g., validity claims, reasons), permits problems or disagreements to be resolved through reasoned decisions, within argumentation.

Habermas distinguishes between communicative action and argumentation. Basically, argumentation is a more reflective form of communicative action. This relationship can be understood, at least analytically, in terms of a reflexive continuum. Situated at one end of the continuum, communicative action is a “rudimentary” form of reaching agreement or argumentation, which is less reflexive and less open to criticism. Contestable validity claims are “raised naively and more or less taken for granted in the context of a shared lifeworld” (2003d:77). In reaching agreement, both speaker and hearer take on an obligation to provide reasons: speakers for their claims, and hearers for their response (yes/no). Within communicative action, good reasons, however, tend to be inflexibly precast within traditions or established normative patterns in a community or a family, for example. At this more elementary level, communicative action involves little more than yes/no responses to validity claims (Cooke 1994:29).

Argumentation, the more reflexive form of communicative action, stands at the other end of the continuum. In one discussion, Habermas indicates that when validity claims become problematized, participants “switch” from communicative action to argumentation. Within this discursive practice, participants are open to convincing arguments and to change (2003d:77). In this case, “argumentative processes are critical and open-ended” (Cooke 1994:30). Good reasons, for both speaker and hearer, are contestable. In another explanation, Habermas says that

argumentation, or discourse, moves beyond “any particular form of life” to include other competent individuals. He writes that argumentation “generalizes, abstracts, and stretches the presuppositions of context bound communicative actions” (1990:202). In both cases, communicative action and argumentation, lifeworld plays a critically important role as both context and resource. And, in both cases, the successful agreement is reabsorbed back within lifeworld, for future use.

The opening and closing of lifeworlds within argumentative practices creates the conditions for learning through the “power of revision” (2003d:78). Since argumentative processes begin within a specific “horizon of meaning”, the outcomes of these practices can “alter” the “linguistically disclosed world”. Revision potentials flow out of “the discursive processing of action-related experiences”. Learning experiences can occur through “pragmatically coping with an objective world” or through “interactive coping with members of a social world”. When experiences do not fit with established beliefs or practices, this may trigger a revision of assumptions (about beliefs, knowledge) or normative expectations (about everyday practices) (2003d:78). The demanding nature of argumentative practices facilitates these learning experiences.

Habermas describes argumentation as a “language game” in which there is a “cooperative” “competition” for the better argument. The goal of the game is to “convince” each other. As in communicative action, the aim is mutual understanding. The game can only be won through a public process of convincing an opponent that a contested validity claim is warranted (has good reasons). The “convincing force of the better argument” wins acceptance (2003d:106).

2.3.5.3.4 Presuppositions Argumentation is a “more specialized” and “reflexive” form of communication (2002b:83). The reflexive nature of these communicative engagements places more demands upon participants. Because they are “heavily presuppositioned”, arguments, Habermas observes, are “improbable” (1994b:111). He writes that, “Discourses [arguments] are islands in the sea of practice, that is, improbable forms of communication; the everyday appeal to validity-claims implicitly points, however, to their possibility” (1982:235).

Habermas holds that these improbable practices become a “court of appeal” for resolving disagreements which cannot “be repaired with everyday routines” or by the “strategic use of force” (1984b:18). Thus, even though it is an improbable communicative practice, argumentation can resolve disagreements consensually, because of the normative content of its “shared presuppositions” (1998a:40).

Arguments occur when social actors “thematize contested validity claims” in order to “vindicate or criticize” them. Reasons are systematically proffered in support of these claims. Strong arguments depend upon whether “the soundness of the reasons” can “convince” others to accept the contested claim. Criticizable validity claims therefore point to the possibility of “improvement”. We learn, for instance, as we correct our mistakes. Learning and grounding (e.g., proffering reasons), Habermas asserts, are “interwoven” (1984b:18). In terms of action coordination, this means there must be “good reasons” (or grounds) supporting the decision(s) for action or behavior (1984b:22).

Habermas describes criticizable validity claims as being “Janus-faced”. On the one hand, each claim, as a claim, transcends local contexts and local agreements. And, as claims, they rely on a “subversive, ever-flexible reservoir of potential, disputable reasons”. On the other hand, each claim is raised “here and now” – within local contexts – and is “de facto recognized” or acknowledged. Validity claims both point beyond local contexts, a “transcendent moment”, and reside within them, an “obligatory moment”, simultaneously. Simply, any proffered validity claim is potentially contestable. Habermas notes that “a moment of *unconditionality* is built into *factual* processes of mutual understanding” (1987a:322 also 1998c:206).

Habermas also portrays the Janus-faced nature of validity claims in terms of a tension between the ideal and the real, from the perspective of the participants engaged in discourse. On the one side, participants in argumentation must reciprocally assume that certain ideal presuppositions have been “sufficiently met”. If not, the argument could not proceed. On the other side, participants also realize that their discursive practices are never totally free of empirical constraints: such as, “motives” and “compulsions” (1987a:323). Of course, participants are also aware

that they are embedded within everyday shared social practices (e.g., family, church, employment). The same participants who make demanding assumptions about their discursive practices (the ideal), are also influenced by empirical constraints and are embedded within everyday life-contexts (the real).

In reference to these demanding assumptions, Habermas provides this description:

The structure of the use of language oriented toward reaching understanding demands idealizing suppositions on the part of the communicative actors; however, these suppositions function as social facts and are, as is language itself, constitutive for the form in which sociocultural life reproduces itself. (1998c:207)

Idealized suppositions have the formidable task of molding the communicative practices which reproduce social life. Although more visible within argumentative practices, these presuppositions infuse and influence everyday life-practices and life-contexts.

If there is a genuine desire to “convince one another” on the basis of good reasons, then participants in communicative action “must accept certain idealizations in the form of presuppositions of communication” (1993:31). These “*anticipatory* suppositions” facilitate communicative practices of reaching understanding. Indeed, without these presuppositions, everyday consensus oriented communicative practices would devolve into strategic action. “Presuppositions of rationality do not impose obligations to act rationally; they make possible the practice that participants understand as argumentation” (1993:31). Though common to all forms of communicative action, these presuppositions are more visible and “accessible” within argumentation (2002b:83). Perhaps one poignant portraiture of these presuppositions is that participants in argumentation presuppose, generally, freedom from domination (1985a:101).

Habermas has identified a number of “strong idealizations” (1992b:46; also Cooke 1994: 30) which must be sufficiently fulfilled in order for argumentation to proceed. Participants in communicative practices have, Habermas stresses, an intuitive awareness that “we cannot rationally convince anyone, not even ourselves”

unless we accept these idealizations, from the start. The three idealizations he identifies in this context are: all relevant voices are heard; the best arguments are presented; and the unforced force of the better argument prevails. The “idealizing force” of these presuppositions, he contends, “penetrates into the heart of everyday communicative praxis”. It reaches into every “fleeting speech-act-offer”, into every yes/no response for which reasons count. Clearly, the ideal is “deeply rooted” in the real, in the everyday practices of reaching understanding. While validity claims transcend the contexts within which claims are made, they have to be “raised and gain acceptance” within those contexts (“here and now”). Therein lies the tension. In order to coordinate actions, the ideal must penetrate the real. There must be agreement for action coordination (1993:145-146).

Elsewhere, Habermas provides a list of what he calls the four most important presuppositions necessary for argumentation. He refers to these as “strong” and “unavoidable” idealizations. He identifies them as: “publicity and inclusiveness”; “equal rights to engage in communication”; “exclusion of deception and illusion”; and “absence of coercion”. Everyone who can contribute must be included. Everyone must be allowed to contribute. Everyone must “mean what they say”. And, there should be no restrictions upon the better argument (2003d:106-107; also 269). Habermas refers to the first two and last one as the “rules of egalitarian universalism” (2003d:107). Alternatively, the first two can be understood as relations of symmetry, and are oriented to the speech situation. The second two refer to relations of reciprocity, and are concerned with the action situation. These sets of rules (symmetry) and sets of relations (reciprocity) comprise the preconditions for a rational agreement based on the better argument (Benhabib 1986:285; also Habermas 1998a:39, 40).

Habermas further summarizes these four suppositions as complete inclusion, equal opportunity to participate, “uncoerciveness”, and an “orientation toward reaching mutual understanding” (2003d:269). When dealing with moral-practical problems, the first two and the last supposition secure the consideration of everyone’s “interests and value orientations”. The third supposition requires that

participants be “critically” observant for self-deception and sensitive to the understanding others have of themselves and the world (2003d:107).

The reference to these presuppositions as “strong idealizations” raises the question of how it is possible for arguments to proceed given these stringent conditions or “rules”. Actual conditions often fall short of the ideal: the number of participants can be limited; privilege and prejudice can affect participation and openness to argument; and some participants may behave strategically, and seek success. Participants are usually aware of these limitations. Often abrogations of these presuppositions result in a self-correcting process within the argumentation. It is enough, Habermas states, that participants proceed from the assumption that the process will allow the “substance of reasons” to prevail (2003d:107-108).

These suppositions are “operatively effective” for participants’ behaviors. There is an “idealizing anticipation” that validity claims will be justifiable in “wider forums, before an ever more competent and larger audience, against new objections” (2003d:108-109). For example, within practical discourses, which are concerned with constructing and applying moral and legal norms, there is an anticipation that the social world will expand to include “strangers and their claims” (2003d:109; also 1990:202). Habermas describes this as a “*liberating* arrangement” within which participants are motivated by “actor-independent reasons”, or the “rational motives of *others*” (2003d:270).

The pragmatic presuppositions discussed here have a normative content that is shared by both communicative action and argumentation. Although implicit within communicative action, within rational discourse (argumentation) these presuppositions become “*generalized, abstracted, and freed from all limits*”. This normative content, Habermas argues, provides an answer to the “modern dilemma”. Since there are, no longer, any metaphysical guarantees (e.g., for giving meaning or for ordering life-activities) (2003b:1), individuals have to secure “their normative orientations from themselves alone”. The one resource available is the everyday communicative practice of reaching agreement. If modern individuals are to be able to coordinate their interactions and to resolve problems intersubjectively, peacefully

and cooperatively, then they must utilize the normative resources available within everyday communicative practices. They must use what they already share (1998a:40, 41).

Habermas maintains that modernity must find its normativity within itself (1987a:7). As outlined above, he suggests that everyday discursive practices (communicative action) have a normative content, and that the normative content of argumentation is “borrowed” from communicative action. In fact, discourses are “superimposed” over communicative action (1990:201, 202). Given that social spaces and social dimensions are linguistically mediated, managed and reproduced, given that language is the primary means by which we coordinate our activities, and given the egalitarianism of the strong idealizations inherent within communicative action and argumentation, everyday discursive practices appear to be a viable solution to the problem of modernity.

It is not just actual argumentative practices which have a normative content. Within posttraditional societies, Habermas suggests, a “residual normative substance” (e.g., ideal presuppositions) can be found in various “formal features of argumentation and action oriented to reaching a shared understanding [communicative action]” (1998a:45). This residue can be preserved either formally (e.g., legally) or informally (e.g., traditions, custom). It is in this sense that forms of life and democratic procedure, for example, also have a normative content. However, it would be a misunderstanding to assume that the normativity within these latter forms is either unrelated to, or the same as, that of discursive practices.

On the one hand, forms of life are “interwoven with relations of reciprocal recognition”. Various traditions and socialization patterns reflect different capacities for the rational practice of consensus formation. Because forms of life are discursively maintained and reproduced, they do share common structural features with language (1998a:40). On the other hand, democratic procedure and law borrow their core structures from the normative content of argumentation in as much as discursive rules and “forms of argumentation”, within parliamentary bodies for instance, reflect the four strong idealizations (1996b:296-297). By extension, to the

degree familial relationships are coordinated discursively, the normative resources of language oriented to reaching understanding are also available in this social realm. The question of the extent to which these presuppositions are utilized in coordinating familial interactions is central to Chapters Four.

A few concluding remarks about these presuppositions are appropriate at this point. First, as sketched above, argumentative practices can be found within “all cultures and societies”, in either “institutionalized” forms or within “informal” everyday practices (1998a:43). An example of the former would be courts of law, and the latter, problem solving in family. Naturally, concrete manifestations such as these can vary significantly depending on socio-cultural and religious background contexts. Second, there is no “functionally equivalent alternative” to discursive problemsolving (1998a:43). Without the use of force or influence, how can the social action – social order – social change dynamic be constructed so that all spheres of action can be explained?

Third, these universal presuppositions are not normative “in the moral sense”. These are enabling not motivating conditions. For instance, inclusivity refers to “unrestricted access to discourse”, not to a universally binding norm. Even the absence of coercion applies to the “process of argumentation” as opposed to “interpersonal relations outside of this practice” (1998a:44-45). In essence, argumentation is a “problem-solving procedure that generates *convictions*” (1993:158). Moral obligations attach to the “specific objects of practical discourse”, such as norms, about which arguments over reasons are considered (1998a:44-45).

Fourth, obligations for continued action and action coordination are attached to the “gentle, persuasive force of reasons”. Reasons can be understood as the cognitive content of argumentation. And, they are what recommend argumentative practices as a rational problem solving mechanism. There is another equally important dimension of obligation, “the feeling of being obligated” and the consequent evaluations. When a moral agreement (e.g., a moral rule for guiding life-action) is transgressed (e.g., incest), the critical position adopted in respect to that violation is evinced in “affective attitudes”. These attitudes vary according to

the perspective of the person involved: (a) “abhorrence, indignation, and contempt” – third person perspective; (b) “feelings of violation or resentment toward [other] ... persons” – perspective of person(s) affected; and (c) “shame and guilt” – first person perspective. There are corresponding positive emotional responses, such as “admiration, loyalty, gratitude”, when rules are not broken. These implicit judgements become formal or explicit through actoral evaluations based on these feelings: “actions and intentions” are good or bad; personal qualities of individuals are virtuous or depraved. Because these feelings and evaluations are tied to ‘good reasons’, they are not “mere sentiments or preferences” (1998a:4-5).

Fifth, Habermas also refers to “equal respect” and “solidaristic responsibility” as the footing of a “universalistic morality” (1998a:39, 40). If human fragility is the primary focus of morality, then it has to fulfill two complementary tasks, at the same time: promote the dignity and inviolability of individuals through equal respect; and protect the “relations of mutual recognition” within which group memberships solidify and through which identities are formed. Morality must protect both. In very simple terms, moral concern links a principle of justice (equal respect) with a principle of solidarity (solidaric responsibility). As principles, justice stresses individual (equal) rights and equal respect, and solidarity focuses on the well-being of others through empathy and concern. In terms of the action – order – change dynamic, justice is associated with “subjective” freedom and individuality, and solidarity is connected to the well-being of community members whose lifeworlds overlap (1990:200; 1998a:40). If argumentation is the communicative practice within which ethical, pragmatic and moral issues are intersubjectively resolved, then justice and solidarity are centrally important themes. A more detailed analysis of discourse (e.g., moral and ethical discourses) and action coordination is undertaken in Chapter Three and Chapter Four.

And finally, the unconditionality of argumentation, which is underwritten by contestable validity claims and normatively referenced by idealized presuppositions, “forces” upon participants “totalizing anticipations, abstractions, and transgressions of boundaries” (2003d:99). The notion of boundary transgressions, understood as

moving beyond the taken for granted sureties or the lifeworld background, is a pivotal aspect of learning processes and social change. It also points to the lifeworld as a massive stabilizing force within the action – order – change dynamic of everyday life.

2.3.5.3.5 Lifeworld Reason, Habermas argues, is “incarnated” in both “contexts of communicative action” and the “structures of the lifeworld”. The rational basis of his theory of communicative action, and therefore of the social action – social order – social change dynamic, is found in argumentation. The yes/no positions social actors assume on contestable validity claims perform a “key function” within our everyday communicative practices. Agreements derived from intersubjectively recognized validity claims interconnect “social interactions” and “lifeworld contexts” (1987a:322). On the one hand, agreements require the preexisting resources of the lifeworld. On the other hand, lifeworld is reproduced through the same communicative actions. Action coordination is possible through both an implicitly (e.g., within everyday communicative practices) and an explicitly (e.g., within arguments) achieved intersubjective agreement. Where the former is derived from past agreements (e.g., stored in lifeworld) and simply (usually) acknowledged, the latter is established in discourses. Communicative sociation and lifeworld background are highly interdependent. Habermas presents these as complementary concepts.

Most often, everyday communicative engagements are routine encounters. Participants ‘rubber stamp’ utterances on the basis of common background knowledge. This knowledge, which provides a foundation for coordinating actions, consists of a number of certainties: ways of understanding the world and value orientations that have become sedimented within shared cultural representations; dependencies and patterned relationships that have become solidified into the (legitimate) institutional framework of society; and, attitudes and motivations that have become socialized into personalities or identities. Although everyone has access to these lifeworld resources, their nature and accessibility can differ for each individual. Whenever validity claims are disputed, the “beliefs and intentions” of

participants – who make “independent judgements and decisions” – must be harmonized (2003d:129). Reaching understanding rests on sufficiently overlapping lifeworld backgrounds, against which utterances are assessed and from which relevant reasons are retrieved and discussed.

It is useful to conceptualize communicative action as a “circular process” involving social actors who are both initiators and products. The social actor as initiator “masters situations” through accountable actions. She is confronted by “a segment of the lifeworld” which appears “as a problem” that must be resolved, through her “own efforts” (1990:135). Action coordination necessitates an intersubjective and linguistic solution. In reaching understanding with someone else about the problem, she draws upon a “mass of intersubjectively shared, unthematic knowledge” in order to make her position plausible. As a participant, she appears as the “initiator” of the lifeworld background (1998c:246,239). As the analytic focus shifts from actors as initiators to actors as products, a reciprocal change in methodology is required: from a participant perspective (initiator), to an observer perspective (product).

The methodological shift to an observer who stands behind the participants allows lifeworld to be seen as a whole. Communicative action then appears as part of a circular learning process. Social actors emerge as products of a lifeworld in which they are always already situated. They are positioned within traditions, belong to solidary groups, and are socialized into individual identities (1998c:246,239). At this level, participants reach understanding about something within a “context forming horizon of the lifeworld” (1998c:174). Only then can “networks” of communicative practices be seen as the “medium” for reproducing lifeworld (1998c:246,239), and as the integrative mechanism of a form of life.

If society is understood as a network of “linguistically mediated interactions”, then access to it must proceed hermeneutically, as opposed to objectively. A linguistically constituted, maintained and reproduced socio-cultural life-context must be understood from within. As an object for analysis, society has to be linked with social action and with participants’ “interpretative efforts” (1998c:235). Interpretively

established meanings have become symbolically sedimented within the background knowledge and experience that participants utilize within their communicative practices. As participants cooperatively and communicatively attempt to coordinate their actions with each other, they draw on this knowledge. Thus, lifeworld, as the totality of this background knowledge, is a complementary concept to communicative action (1998c:235). Understood this way, communicative action is “embedded” within lifeworld (1998c:237) and reproduces lifeworld. Only then does a theory of action connect up with social theory. The idea of society can be linked to lifeworld which conceptually complements communicative action (1998c:174).

The ensuing discussion will focus on several themes which further highlight lifeworld’s importance for the action coordinating potential of communicative action. These observations provide a rough sketch of the interconnections between lifeworld and the social action – social order– social change dynamic. Two significant implications emerge from the (communicative) linguistic foundations of social action and of social order: (a) the contingency of our everyday communicative practices; and (b) the paradoxical nature of the lifeworld-system interchange. Both reflect the conditional nature of communicative action. And, they both point in the direction of a potential for emancipation, for changed life-conditions.

(a) First, everyday life confronts everyone as a sea of contingency within which social actors must communicatively coordinate their ongoing interactions. Every experience is a new experience. And, each new experience becomes another opportunity for disagreement: “Experiences frustrate expectations, run counter to habitual modes of perception, trigger surprises, make us conscious of new things” (1998d:236). In order to coordinate actions, communicative action must absorb this contingency.

The double contingency of all communicative engagements means social actors have the freedom to agree or not to agree (1998d:204). This contingency is amplified by the dependency of every agreement (to a speech act offer) upon a “double negation” – “the repudiation of the (always possible) rejection” of a validity claim. Habermas proposes that the ability to say ‘no’ creates a “maelstrom of

problematization” for communicatively achieved consensus, and therefore for social integration. When disagreement occurs, there are five options: to do “simple repair work”, to bracket problematic validity claims thereby reducing the “common ground of shared convictions”; to switch to costlier (time, effort) discourses; to stop the communication; or to switch to strategic action (1998c:236). And each new experience (or problem) communicatively recycles this action coordinating problem. Simple repair work notwithstanding, social integration rests on a risky (communicative) mechanism.

These new experiences become a “counterbalance” to the “familiar” and stable lifeworld background. Within social life, “the surprising” (new experiences) balances “the familiar” (lifeworld) (1998d:236). Yet communicative action’s embeddedness within a preexisting lifeworld provides “a massive background consensus” which can absorb risks. Each communicative act, and all communicative practices, occur within a lifeworld horizon of “shared, unproblematic convictions”. It is within this horizon that the “disquiet” flowing from new experiences, as well as from “critique”, collides with the sureties of “agreed-upon interpretative patterns, loyalties, and proficiencies” (1998c:237). The question here is: how can social order devolve from this contingency? The answer, it seems, resides with communicative action and the lifeworld background.

The content of everyday communicative practices is usually “unproblematic, escapes criticism, and avoids the pressure of surprise exerted by critical experiences”. The lifeworld background provides a wide range of pre-established “agreed-upon certainties” which are used to support validity claims. So, lifeworld stabilizes validity. However, these certainties differ with respect to the ease with which they can be drawn into debate or discussion (1998c:240-241). Relatively foregrounded knowledge, for example would devolve from overlapping life-histories (friendships, lovers) and common educational and cultural background. It is more accessible within argumentation. Ordinarily, sufficiently shared knowledge is “unproblematic” and “acceptable” (1998c:241).

Beyond foregrounded knowledge lies a “deep substratum of unthematized knowledge”, which is more difficult to bring to consciousness. Its “greater stability” means that it cannot easily be made problematic by “contingency-generating experiences”. Considerable “*methodical effort*” is required to destabilize it. Deep-seated background knowledge can only be thematized by the pressure of dramatic conditions such as “world-historical” or “life-historical” crises (1998c:242-243). For some, the critical experience of 9-11 shook their firmly held cultural assumptions about the supremacy of the American way of life.

Habermas characterizes the implicit and prereflective nature of background knowledge in terms of “three attributes”: immediacy, totalizing power, and holistic constitution. First, lifeworld’s background knowledge has an immediate certainty to it. This knowledge becomes accessible as soon as it is referenced by a validity claim. At that point, “at the moment in which it is expressed in language”, it becomes “fallible”. Thus, these absolute certainties are so close, yet so far – imperceptibly present (1998c:243-244). Second, Habermas describes lifeworld as a totalizing power. At its center is the “common speech situation”. Within speech, lifeworld’s “porous borders” recede allowing individual lifeworlds to “telescope into each other, overlap, and entwine” (1998c:244). Third, lifeworld has a holistic constitution which appears to be “impenetrable”. Habermas likens it to a “thicket”. Elements are fused together, and can only be detached by “the pressure of problematizing experiences” (1998c:244-245).

These attributes provide an explanation as to how contingency is balanced “through proximity to experience”. The lifeworld is composed of “sureties” which create a barrier to the surprises of experience. In other words, the past buffers the present. Yet only problem experiences can shake this knowledge loose for use in discourse (1998c:245). One could say that, within the discursive vindication of contested validity claims, the present-past can become a ‘future present’ (Phrase adapted and borrowed from 2003b:vii and 1992b:188).

As lifeworld opens to the challenges of new information and new experiences, taken-for-granted understandings and agreements can be questioned

and reconfigured. Lifeworld immediately closes, preserving for future use the new understanding generated through the communicative action. Thus, learning processes occur through the lifeworld. And, these learning processes point toward an emancipatory potential which resides within everyday discursive practice. It also reveals how social actions, discursively linked in practices of reaching understanding, can become complex, layered networks of interactions.

(b) The second implication concerning the communicative foundation of social action and of social order is the paradoxical nature of the lifeworld-system interchange. Modern social (formations) orders are characterized by different and often competing mechanisms for coordinating actions: system, which is functionally integrated; and lifeworld, which is communicatively integrated. Habermas models the relationship between these action spheres in terms of a lifeworld-system interchange. As his interchange model and his model of boundary conflicts indicate, the functionalist reason driving “self-regulating” subsystems (e.g., economy, state administration) poses a significant challenge for everyday communicative practices. However, as long as lifeworld reproductive functions are not colonized by system imperatives, a workable balance between the two action orders may be possible. Once again, one can ask how social order can be explained communicatively in terms of this interchange. And, as before, lifeworld and communicative action provide the framework for a response.

To Habermas, the answer seems simple enough. In terms of explaining the social action – social order – social change dynamic, it appears that functionalist reason, which drives self-regulating subsystems, has limited explanatory ability. In the first place, lifeworld rationalization – the expansion of the “rational potential of action oriented toward reaching understanding” within everyday life (1987a:346) – has created the conditions for the development of autonomous, media-steered subsystems. There are limits to lifeworld’s capacity to integrate itself through linguistic practices of reaching understanding. The time and energy required to discuss and come to an agreement about *everything* can be quite costly. Therefore, relief mechanisms are needed to mitigate the demands upon language

for socially integrating interactions. Steering media (money, power) have an integrating ability because they are modeled on language: “they are a substitute for the special functions of language” (1987c:263).

Because these media are non-linguistic, they can condition actoral decisions in ways which bypass “more demanding and higher-risk feats” of reaching agreement communicatively (1987c:262). Even though steering media (money and power) “branch off” from everyday language, decisionmaking within action networks integrated by these media do not (directly) depend upon lifeworld resources. Actions are conditioned by preferences built into steering media rather than by communicative action and lifeworld resources: “the medium itself [money, power] now transmits the system-maintenance imperatives of the system in question” (1998c:234). Functional integration, however, only applies to specific action domains, such as economic markets and administrative systems. Accordingly, strategic action, a primary mode of action within these domains, cannot explain all social action. Communicative actions also occur within these normatively (legally) grounded subsystems.

What is important for understanding system (economy, politics) is that interaction patterns are functionally, as opposed to communicatively (e.g., reach understanding), integrated. Money and power, which function as “special codes” with pre-established “preferences”, replace mutual understanding as an action coordinating mechanism, but only in “certain well-defined contexts” (e.g., economic marketplace) (1987c:262). Special codes are modeled on language, but do not “simulate” all features. They cannot, for instance, reproduce a lifeworld which is dependent upon mutual understanding (1987c:263). Steering media can, nonetheless, relieve the growing demand for consensus through actors’ own “interpretive” energies, and the concomitant risk of dissensus (1987c:261ff). For reasons such as these, Habermas’ concern with the rational basis of action coordination leads him to stress the importance of communicative action and lifeworld.

If society is understood (from an observer perspective) to be a “symbolically structured lifeworld”, then society is generated and reproduced through communicative action (1998c:248). Lifeworld components – culture, society and personality structures – can be characterized in terms of (a) their reproduction, (b) their embodiment, (c) their distinctness, and (d) their interconnectedness.

(a) First, the three lifeworld components are “condensed forms of, and sediments deposited by” three reproductive processes: reaching understanding, action coordination, and socialization. The following quote summarizes how these components are “developed and reproduced” through communicative practices (communicative action) (1998c:247-248).

What enters into communicative action from the resources of the background of the lifeworld, flows through the sluice gates of thematization, and permits the mastery of situations, constitutes the stock of knowledge preserved within communicative practices. This stock of knowledge solidifies, along paths of interpretation, into interpretive paradigms that are handed down; the knowledge becomes compressed, in the network of interactions of social groups, into values and norms; and it condenses, by way of socialization processes, into attitudes, competencies, modes of perception, and identities. The components of the lifeworld result from and are maintained through the continuation of valid knowledge, the stabilization of group solidarities, and the formation of accountable actors. (1998c:247)

These everyday communicative practices develop into webs which are layered within “social space” and sequenced within “historical time” (1998c:247-248).

(b) Second, each of the three components is experienced differently by participants acting communicatively. Culture acts as a “cone of light” or a meaning structure through which participants make sense of their interactions and represent things in the world. By contrast, norms and subjective experiences are encountered as part of social and subjective worlds, respectively. In referring to these worlds, communicatively acting participants adopt either a norm-conformative attitude or an expressive attitude (1998c:248). Spatiotemporally, these components are embodied within different forms: cultural knowledge within symbols (“technologies”, “theories”, “books”) and action; society within institutions, “legal norms” and

“normative” practices; and, personality within the “human organism” or bodies (1998c:249-250).

(c) Third, although constructed through the same medium, communicative action, these components remain “distinct quantities” (1998c:250). Cultural traditions span social space and historical time, having an independence from societies and persons. Societies are not as diffuse as cultural traditions yet exist in time and space beyond individual life-histories. Personality structures are tied to “organic substrata” (e.g., bodies) which are delimited by life-histories. Individuals are interconnected to culture and society through “an overarching generational interrelationship” (e.g., through socialization in family) (1998c:250).

(d) And fourth, these components (culture, society, individual) are highly interconnected. They are not independent of each other. The multifunctionality of everyday language permits each dimension to relate to lifeworld as a whole. Specialized action systems such as “school”, “law” and “family”, while each fulfilling a specific function (e.g., cultural reproduction, social integration, socialization, respectively), also “concurrently” satisfy the other functions as well. Even though each component is embodied differently and has its own distinct meaning, they (the components) “communicate” with each other. Language is able to circulate the meanings embedded within these different components. In so doing, “[a]ll meaning comes together in the marketplace of everyday communicative practices” (1998c:250). Within processes of everyday communication these meanings can be challenged, clarified, accepted and changed.

Habermas uses this model of intermeshing lifeworld components to explain a fundamental concern of social theory, the individual-society relationship. He presents the relationship between the individual and society as dynamic and interactive rather than as statical or oppositional. He begins by making reference to what lifeworld is not. Lifeworld is not an external “*environment*” with which individuals, as observers, contend. It is not a “receptacle” in which parts (individuals) are deposited. He also adds that it is not an “organization” requiring membership. It is not an “association” to be joined. And, it is not a “collective” of

“individual parts” (1998c:251). Individuals, therefore, cannot be described as “carriers” of either culture or society (1998c:252). The relationships between individual and culture and between individual and society are reciprocal.

Individuals become “persons” (motivated, competent) through socialization processes. Socialization embeds culture and society within individual identities. Individuals are linked to each other and to culture and society through language (“grammatical relationships”). Culture, as the acquired knowledge of tradition, is both a resource and an accomplishment. Habermas refers to cultural tradition as a “process of education” within which personalities are shaped and through which culture is preserved (and changed). Society only becomes a “totality of legitimately ordered interpersonal relationships” through the action coordinating efforts of individuals, who are socialized through the same coordinative process (1998c:251-252). This holds for the whole range of normative orders, from formal institutions to more “fleeting” relationships. Thus, individuals are formed and shaped by culture and society as much as they reciprocally form and shape culture and society through their speech and actions.

Habermas also distinguishes three different innerworldly learning processes. Two of them are suprasubjective in nature (cultural and social) and the third is person-centered. Suprasubjective learning processes relate to the material reproduction of lifeworld: “cultural and social innovations ... find expression in the forces of production or structures of consciousness”. The third innerworldly learning process, which is “dependent upon persons”, involves education (e.g., culture) and socialization (e.g., society) processes. It is here that the lifeworld becomes “structurally differentiated” (1998c:252-253). And it is this learning process that is of interest here.

Habermas describes the dynamic of the structural differentiation of lifeworld (e.g., lifeworld rationalization) in terms of an interaction between (linguistic) “world disclosure and innerworldly learning processes”. This interaction, he states, occurs within practices of reaching understanding. Within everyday discursive practices (e.g., argumentation), knowledge “expands” and meanings change (1998c:336).

These interpretive accomplishments are reabsorbed within the lifeworld background for use within other, future discursive engagements. Thus, within lifeworld, reason is manifested in discursive practices which have an emancipatory potential.

2.3.5.4 Comments:

The lifeworld background, which is linguistically “articulated” (1998c:335, and 336), enables society’s rational potential. Individuals’, and therefore society’s, interpretive capacities and learning potentials are dependent upon this linguistically constituted background. Lifeworld’s contribution to this rational potential has been characterized in terms of several functions which it fulfills: an “interpretive horizon” and a “reservoir of resources” for processes of communicative action (1998c:335; also 1990:135); a stabilizing mechanism for social order (1998c:240, 245); and, an integral component within ongoing learning processes (1998c:335).

The importance of communicative action and lifeworld for understanding the rational potential – an emancipatory potential – cannot be overstated. Habermas asserts that, “the lifeworld, which is itself articulated in the medium of language, opens up for its members an interpretive horizon for everything that they experience in the world, about which they reach understanding, and from which they can learn” (1998c:335). Individuals’, and therefore society’s, interpretive capacities and learning potentials are dependent upon this linguistically constituted background.

Within communicative action, the lifeworld background is continually tested, “across its entire breadth”. Each yes or no response, to each of the validity claims (truth, rightness, truthfulness), within each problem situation, brings relevant aspects of the lifeworld background (“assumptions”, “solidarities”, “skills”) into discursive focus (1987a:321, 325). This communicative process, therefore, becomes a learning process. The “spectrum” of validity claims (truth, rightness, truthfulness) available within practices of communicative action become a “feedback” mechanism for learning processes through which continuously altered preunderstandings encounter shifting horizons within evolving historical contingencies. Even learning processes themselves become subject to the potential shifts of historical change within lifeworld(s) reproduction (1998c:25).

The power for revision, Habermas argues, is found in “the discursive processing of action-related experiences”. These experiences come from our pragmatic coping with the objective world, and from our interactive coping with other people in the social world. The failure of accepted understandings and routine practices to provide us with the means to cope with life-experience may trigger a discursive revision of our “assumptions and normative expectations” (2003d:78). A “retransformation” process occurs through this discursive process. As (hypothetical) principles and norms are discursively critiqued and accepted, they become (“revert” into) “binding values” and “normative beliefs” which guide action. In the process, they are reabsorbed into the lifeworld background. With the shift from discourse to lifeworld, these values become available as resources within particular forms of life (2003d:275). This is how the “ethnocentrism of linguistic worldviews and linguistically structured lifeworlds” can be transformed (2003d:78). Moral learning processes, Habermas contends, involves the “expansion” and “reciprocal interpenetration” of non-overlapping social worlds. Learning occurs as the participants in a dispute “include one another in a world they construct together”. In this way they (can) come to hold “matching standards of evaluation” for resolving problematic actions or action situations (2003d:105). Argumentation, as rational discourse, is directly oriented toward inclusivity, of all affected parties, of all relevant interests. Thus, lifeworlds need to intersect and overlap.

Since lifeworlds are reproduced through processes of reaching understanding, communicative rationality “asserts itself in the multiplicity of concrete forms of life” (1998c:190). While lifeworlds “always” appear “in the plural”, they are reproduced through the “same communicative infrastructure” (e.g., argumentation) (2003d:228). As social actors cooperate, they “mutually presuppose” a shared world perspective, such that the background becomes (operatively) singular for these actors. Whereas within discourse, the “corroborating authority” of lifeworld is “suspended”. Once the interpretive dispute is settled, actors once again refer to the “*same world*” (2003d:255).

Habermas adamantly stresses that reason is not “a free-floating process”.

For starters, it cannot be employed “outside of” local contexts. This assertion makes sense if communicative rationality is embodied within speech, or more specifically speech acts. As well, the criteria for judging (e.g., reasons) these utterances is drawn from these same contexts. For example, we cannot talk about right and wrong action unless we have some background reference (e.g., cultural values, normative standards). The critical standards of communicative reason therefore point beyond the local context in which it is located (2003d:221). The tension between the real and the ideal within validity statements is reflected in the immanence and transcendence of reason.

In the example which follows, Habermas’ foray into the current debate regarding genetic engineering is used to demonstrate how he, as a public intellectual, applies his critical theory to a current public issue. He is concerned that genetic bioengineering may alter an individual’s self-understanding and therefore limit her capacity to be a responsible, self-dependent participant in a moral community. As serious as this issue is, the focus here is not upon the nature of the problem, or the normative responses we individually or collectively should or should not take in response to it. Rather, key themes within Habermas’ argument are used to demonstrate how he applies his critical theory, especially in connection to social action – social order – social change dynamic and the individual-society relationship. It is an abbreviated and focused analysis of some of these connections, not a critique.

2.3.6 EXAMPLE

Habermas has recently become involved in the controversial debate surrounding the ethical, moral and political implications of genetic engineering (2003b). His concern is “guided”, he states, by the implications genetic engineering has for “our life-prospects and for our self-understanding as human beings” (2003b:22; Unless stated otherwise all references in this section are from this source). Given the profound implications of bioengineering, Habermas feels that philosophical discussion has been wanting (75). By exploring some of the “unplumbed philosophical depths” (75), he hopes to bring greater clarity to what he

calls “a rather mixed-up set of intuitions” (22). Habermas’ methodological approach is to adopt an “anticipatory perspective” (43), or a “future present” attitude (vii), which turns to the future to look back at the present. In order to effectively address today’s problems we must, he urges, anticipate their future implications (20).

New biotechnologies and the cultural understandings surrounding the science of genetics necessitate a “public discourse” which does not forfeit its content to “biologists”, “engineers”, science fiction (15) or supply and demand. The urgency of philosophically engaging in this debate is heightened because of the interconnectedness between investor interests, national governments and biotechnological research, because of the “inherently slow paced processes of an ethicopolitical opinion and will formation in the public sphere” (18), and because of the need for sociomoral governance. Habermas fears that the “normative and natural foundations” of human existence may become a shadow behind the “narcissistic indulgence” of individual preference (20).

Although contemporary society is confronted with numerous biopolitical issues – gene modification, “substitute organs”, “medically assisted suicide”, institutionalized genetic testing, knowledge use from predictive diagnostics, abortion – Habermas is particularly concerned with prepersonal trait selection and trait manipulation and with genetic research related to these goals (27). These issues bring into relief problems of a “new order” – the biotechnological practice of controlling the “physical basis” of human nature, in a fundamental way (28). Biotechnologies create the opportunity for a new mode of action through the research and practice of genetic manipulation and modification. Using his theory of communicative action as a mooring, Habermas discusses several highly significant issues, including the mode and nature of biogenetic intervention, and the implications of biogenetic intervention for individuals who have been programmed and for society as a moral and democratic community.

While there are, as yet, no definitive moral arguments for a reasoned response to this debate, Habermas believes an “ethics of the species” can provide moral direction. We must, he suggests, proceed with “caution and moderation” (27-

29). Habermas explains species ethics as the basic ethical self-understanding we (all) have which guides us in our attempt to “realize a personal conception of the ‘good life’ according to [our] ... own abilities” (2). More specifically, it is “our capacity to see ourselves as the authors of our own life-histories, and to recognize one another as autonomous persons” (25). We are responsible, self-determining actors (42). Within communities and networks of cooperation, the basic motivation for “right action”, in achieving our life-projects, comes from this species ethical self-understanding (4). In order to achieve our self-determined life-projects, we must show others equal respect, as individuals who are also responsible and self-determining. Since “all *moral persons*” share this “prior *ethical self-understanding of the species*” (40), changes in our ethical self-understanding can alter our moral inclinations. For Habermas, only “nature-like growth”, a growth which has a natural beginning (“natural fate”), can give us the ability to see ourselves “as the authors of own lives and as equal members of the moral community” (42).

Within liberal societies, Habermas warns, there is an ever present risk that genetic decision making can shift to the marketplace, which is “profit” and “demand” oriented. He uses the phrase “liberal eugenics” to refer to practices where decisions regarding intervention within an embryonic genome are left to “the discretion of the parents” (78) and consumers. Under these conditions, preference (parents) and whim (consumers) guide decision making (48). By following their own preferences, parents egocentrically treat the human genome as an object to be manipulated, to be enhanced (51).

Parental intentions manifested in the “eugenically manipulated” child, become “normal element[s]” within the child’s everyday interactions. However, parents’ intentions – their “one-sided and unchallengeable expectation[s]” – do not meet the presuppositions for communicative action, specifically reciprocity. Habermas states that “genetically fixed demands cannot, strictly speaking, be responded to”. Genetic enhancements made on the basis of egocentric preferences cannot be retrospectively altered. By contrast, adjustments or

alterations with respect to past socialization practices can take place through communicative engagement between a child and her parent(s) (50-51).

Deliberately altering our genetic makeup may affect our capacity to be ourselves. To be ourselves requires a “point of reference” which extends beyond socialization, tradition, and interaction. Habermas suggests that the differentiation between “socialization fate” and “natural fate” points to this reference point, “birth” – “the past before our past”. Only by responsibly and critically appropriating their life-histories can individuals understand themselves as “author[s] of ascribable actions” and as the “source of authentic aspirations”. Otherwise they cannot assume a critical “attitude toward [their] socialization fate” or develop “a revisionary self-understanding”. Only by referencing their physical (bodily) self to a natural fate beyond socialization fate, can they achieve a continuity within their life-history. Bodily existence must be understood as a continuation of a natural fate (birth). Only then can we critically establish the difference between “what we are and what happens *to us*”. Habermas feels that this natural fate should remain beyond “human disposal” (59-60).

With genetic intervention, the programmer’s intentions become “sedimented” within another person’s “heredity factors”. Natural fate has been altered. The programmer’s intentions, now represented in actual traits, are not experienced as “contingent circumstances” which channel actions. They are fixed. The reciprocity demanded of communicative actions is not present. Eugenically programmed “desirable traits and dispositions” produce “moral misgivings” when the programmed person becomes committed (by the programmed traits, dispositions) to a “specific life-project”, or has restricted choices for that life-project. As long as the programmed person attributes the aspirations to herself, and accepts the talents as her own, there is no real difference between a genetic program and socialization practices. Habermas is interested in dissonant cases where acceptance does not occur (60-61).

Because socialization always occurs through communicative action (e.g., “propositional attitudes and decisions”), children may engage in argumentation,

though not as equal participants. Parents' expectations regarding "character building" are "contestable". The child can "retrospectively compensate for the asymmetry of the dependency by liberating themselves through a critical reappraisal of the genesis of such restrictive socialization processes". The situation, however, is different for "genetic determinations" based on parents' preferences. In this case the effect is not revisable. For the programmed person, "an instrumental determination cannot, like a pathogenic socialization process, be revised by 'critical reappraisal'". Genetic manipulation is silent. There is no possibility to develop a revised self-understanding which could bring about a "productive response to the initial situation" (62).

And so, genetic programming establishes an asymmetrical relationship which is paternalistic. On the one hand, "social dependence" can be resolved as the child grows. On the other hand, "geneological dependence" is not reversible. Genetic dependence develops around a single act, procreation. With genetic manipulation, the situation is different. "[E]qual reciprocity of equal birth" no longer holds. Genetic design is not built upon an "assumption of consent". It is paternalistically fulfilled. Consequently, the affected person's life-history is given a certain direction. All the programmed person can do is "interpret", not "revise or undo" the original intention. Because genetic enhancements are irreversible, the programmed person no longer perceives herself as "the undivided author of [her] own life". This situation appears incompatible with the symmetrical relations required within communicative action. For symmetrical relations to prevail, "[n]o dependence on another person must be irreversible" (63-64).

An asymmetrical relationship *is*, however, built into the design process within genetic engineering. The roles of the designer and the designed (product) are not interchangeable. Habermas states that the "product cannot ... draw up a design for its designer". The "ascription" of the design (e.g., traits) creates role irreversibility. And, as was emphasized in the discussion of strong presuppositions, ascription cannot meet the normative standards required for communicative actions – "reciprocal and symmetrical relations of mutual recognition". The asymmetry

created through ascription is also not compatible with “a moral and legal community of free and equal persons” (65).

To participate in a moral community, a person must first hold the status of a member who has “free and equal rights” (78). Only then can she “possess and exercise” those rights. Within such a community, the arbitrary imposition of one member’s desires or purposes on another member is “ruled out”. Furthermore, if this imposition occurs prior to a person’s entry into that community (e.g., prenatally), then the affected person’s freedom to shape her own life, and to participate freely within the community can be delimited (79). Habermas refers to this imposition as the “alien determination” of a person’s genetic makeup (81).

Habermas is concerned that “alien determination” can result in self-devaluation which can affect (“harm”) an individual’s “moral self-understanding”. The problem of self-devaluation does not stem from social circumstances within life-experience. An individual is not oppressed at the interpersonal level, where “one person could oppress another one”. She has the freedom to fashion her own life. Rather, it is “prenatally induced”. The prenatal bioeugenic intervention “asymmetrically and irrevocably” changes the “initial conditions for ... identity formation”. The programmer co-authors another individual’s life through her understanding of her own “autonomy”. Sensing the loss of control over the origin of her life-history, an individual may not be able to take “sole responsibility for her own life”. If she feels her ethical freedom has been changed, she may experience a “fracturing” within her identity. She may feel compelled to share authorship of her life with another or others (81-82).

If an individual cannot identify with the “genetically fixed intentions of her parents”, then she may not understand her decisions and actions as autonomous. She may feel “bound” to her parents’ decisions (preferences). Because these decisions bypass socialization (“as a whole”), they affect her ethical freedom indirectly (91-92). At “risk” is her ability to assume full membership within the moral community (81).

Participation in a moral language game (e.g., argumentation) is conditional upon everyone meeting certain idealizing presuppositions. Habermas identifies three: mutual reciprocity (“rights and duties”), “equal treatment”, and “sole responsibility” for shaping one’s life ethically (92). He suggests that eugenic programming or manipulation can “undermine” (95) these presuppositions, and thereby undermine argumentation. And, if the rules change, then the process which brought about those changes – “the ceaseless drive of biotechnological development” (95) – cannot be criticized through those rules (92). The question of morality itself therefore becomes foregrounded.

If the suppositions of moral discourse (e.g., egalitarian universalism) are in doubt, Habermas wonders how modern pluralistic societies can normatively regulate their problems. One option he (hypothetically) identifies is for societies to switch to a different means of integrating social interactions, of solving problems. He imagines that we could switch from social (lifeworld) integration through reaching agreement to a (future) biogenetic systemic steering medium. The image of an instrumentalized society comes to mind. However, Habermas immediately seeks a basis for criticizing this switch. Since moral arguments against “eugenic self-instrumentalization of the human species” have been ruled out, he turns to an ethics of the species for an answer. With this turn of thought, Habermas is making an “evaluative” question – “how we should understand ourselves” – into a reference point for a moral understanding of the human species (92-93). We are morally self-reflective beings who understand ourselves as autonomous, responsible social actors.

Given his theory of argumentation, Habermas’ shift in focus from moral grounds (e.g., inclusive, highly presuppositioned) towards an ethical foundation (e.g., particularistic, multiple approaches) (92) certainly raises questions about where his theoretical musings are going. Admittedly, this shift in focus means that the “compelling force of strong reasons” (92) (e.g., argumentation) are at least bracketed. Still, an anthropologically centered conception of the moral basis of life does not deny human beings a normative understanding of themselves which is

based on good reasons (93). In other words, reasons still count in our everyday communicative sociations, in raising our children for instance.

Furthermore, ethical considerations can apply to a number of different levels of generalization – ethical-existential (individuals), ethical-political (national), and species-ethical (human beings). Despite this abstractive difference, Habermas identifies a common background nexus: “an always particular, and reflexively appropriated life context”. Thus, what distinguishes us “as exemplars” of all human beings is reduced to “evaluative questions of how we should understand ourselves” (93) – as responsible, self-determining actors.

Habermas is not leveling the difference between “we-perspectives of species-ethical considerations” and a “single moral we-perspective”. The moral we-perspective focuses upon generalizable interests through mutual perspective taking. The species-ethical we-perspective is multiple, involving varying conceptions of what it means to responsibly, self-determine life-trajectories. We can, he proposes, reasonably expect “persistent disagreements” concerning “the best ethical self-understanding”. Still, in order to pursue our conception of the good life (autonomously, responsibly), we must respect the decisions of others to do likewise. This moral inclination (e.g., reciprocity) would be lost within the “eugenic self-optimization of the species, carried out via the aggregated preferences of consumers in the genetic supermarket” (93-94). Confronted with the possible loss of preconditions for discursively reaching mutual understanding, Habermas portends that a species-ethic can stand in its place.

Habermas constructs his hypothetical argument, in part, to plumb the normative dimension of a new order of social practice which is rapidly developing. Within modern pluralistic societies, the rational basis for problem solving continues to be the “moral consciousness” of an egalitarian universalism (92) – mutual consideration and mutual inclusion (73; 2003d:265). Morally just problem solutions, which are based on “rational reasons alone”, require the suppositions of equal respect and solidarity. Elsewhere, Habermas has written that,

moral concern is owed equally to persons both as irreplaceable individuals and as members of the community, and hence it connects justice with solidarity. Equal treatment means equal treatment of unequals who are nonetheless aware of their interdependence. Moral universalism must not take into account the aspect of equality – the fact that persons as such are equal to all other persons – at the expense of the aspect of individuality – the fact that as individuals they are at the same time absolutely different from others. (1998a:40)

He points out that egalitarian universalism, considered a “great achievement of modernity”, has not as yet been fundamentally questioned by other ways of understanding the species-ethic (94). The only challenge possible, according to Habermas, is “the ceaseless drive of biotechnological development” (95). While biotechnology offers tremendous practical benefits, the potential risks for individual and collective forms of life are profound. Even though the eugenic practices Habermas uses as exemplars remain just beyond our reach, they are quite possible. His methodological approach is not “idle speculation” (95-96). The following summary observations capture the essence of Habermas’ concern.

Habermas believes the ethical-moral basis of modern social formations is being challenged by the development of a new, market based order of social practice fueled by biotechnology. In particular, bioeugenic engineering of the prepersonal embryo, based on parental preference, has the potential to alter, fundamentally, the way we understand ourselves, the way we live our lives, and way we interact with others. It can affect our species ethic, the elementary understanding of ourselves as autonomous, responsible, cooperative beings. Since issues of identity are intimately tied to particular life-histories and the trajectories they assume, even minor alterations in self-understanding and self-motivation can have dramatic effects within everyday life. The problem, Habermas stresses, is that instrumentalizing human nature may impair our ability to “see ourselves as ethically free and morally equal beings guided by norms and reasons” (40-41).

Given that from a species ethics perspective self-understanding is common to all “moral persons” (40-41), and given that it is concerned with the “ethical self-understanding of language using agents” (11), any changes to the way we organize

and take responsibility for our lives, or to the way we interact with and understand and treat others, can have profound implications for the ethical-moral foundation of the social action – social order – social change dynamic. If Habermas' assumptions are correct, his moral concern is not unfounded.

Our "individual life-projects" are intimately interconnected with others within a "shared life context" (2). In order for us to achieve our goals, we must also be concerned with the well-being of the community in which we are embedded. For us to pursue our life-projects autonomously, others must also have the same freedom. Thus, an ethical self-understanding conjoins "a concern about one's own well-being" with an "interest in justice" (4). Individual well-being must be tied to an interest in treating others equally (1998a:10). This is foundational for moral inclinations and for communicative action. However, if the presuppositions necessary for moral agreements are not met, as seems possible with respect to preprogrammed (parental preference) genetic enhancements, then the moral foundation for social order could be jeopardized.

Consequently Habermas believes this new order must not develop unopposed. His "principle thesis" is that certain eugenic practices put at risk the "sense of individual autonomy" and the "moral status" of those who are eugenically altered. The solution, he contends, is to stabilize morality by embedding it within everyday life, within "the context of a species-ethical self-understanding" (95-96). Embeddedness is a central theme of Chapter Three.

As for the individual-society relationship, this discussion picks up where it left off in the last section. The dynamic and interactive nature of the individual-society-culture relationship is foundational to Habermas' analysis of the implications of liberal eugenics for human nature and the moral foundation of society. Although an oversimplification, Habermas seems to argue that an instrumental alteration of individual self-understanding risks dissolving the moral order underlying society. It is a frightening thought. Still, he emphasizes that egalitarian universalism (e.g., equal respect, mutual inclusion) is the "only *rationaly* acceptable basis" (italics

mine) for normatively regulating “action problems” in modern, pluralistic societies (92).

Even Habermas’ thought experiment regarding the possibility of shifting mechanisms of action coordination from language oriented to reaching understanding to a biogenetic form of steering media – from communicatively to functionally integrating action – demonstrates the fundamental importance of the individual-society-culture interdependence. What kind of life-projects would be possible if human nature were to become instrumentalized? What would life be like in a society where actions are coordinated by an instrumental purpose coded into a biogenetic steering medium? The eerie silence of the voice of reason speaks very loudly here. In everyday life, we can only achieve our life-projects intersubjectively, communicatively, and consensually. However, communicative interactions require equal respect and mutual recognition. And consensus requires that good reasons count. If good reasons do not count, the moral-legal (normative) regulation of society would have no (rational) foundation. Fortunately, they count.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The preceding example highlights the importance of the rational potential of reason within our everyday communicative practices. If rationality – openness to reasoning, sound judgement – is understood as a “limit concept with normative content” (1992b:136), then it can address three issues. First, communicative rationality can be used as a critical “standard” for assessing distortions within our everyday communicative (action coordinating) practices within modern society (1992b:50). Habermas uses this strategy in his assessment of the implications of liberal eugenics for human nature and for the normative regulation of society. Rightly, he concludes that this instrumentalizing practice needs to be opposed, even controlled. Second, because rationality resides within our discursive practices, within “the conditions for a communicatively achieved agreement” (1998c:300), these practices can be used for problemsolving. And, third, communicative rationality facilitates learning processes through reaching understanding and reaching agreement. Because reason is manifested in discursive practices, an

emancipatory potential inheres our communicative sociations. Thus, the voice of reason is amplified within our communicative actions (1998c:300).

Metaphorically, Habermas asserts that reason is a “rocking hull” in a “sea of contingencies”. While it shudders under the sway and swell of “high seas” (contingency), the hull continues to float (1992b:144). The image is clear, even though the comparison only goes so far. While communicative actors renew social order with each “sequence of interaction”, this order, this “normatively structured society”, must flow out of a constant “groping from one problematic, momentary consensus to the next” (1984b:124). Most of our communicative understanding is achieved routinely, by simple acknowledgment or disagreement. Argumentation, a more reflective form of communicative action, occurs only when reason becomes operative. Within the argumentative process, individual and collective learning takes place. Obviously, arguments are not commonplace, as is communicative action. They are “islands in the sea of practice”, to use another of his metaphors (1982:235).

Habermas believes we do not simply “want to act communicatively”; we “have to” (1994b:111). In order to resolve our problems peacefully, there is no functional alternative to communicative action. Discussing religious tradition, organizing a fund-raising activity, raising children: all represent basic “social functions” which require participants to act communicatively. Yet ongoing communicative activities cannot occur unless there is a “broad background consensus” about which we can reach understanding. Whether we hold the same views and implicitly acknowledge these views in our talk, or whether we reach understanding about them through argumentation (discourse), coordinating our activities communicatively means our lifeworld backgrounds must overlap (1994b:111). Lifeworld contributes to the rational potential of speech in four ways: (a) as an “interpretive horizon” and (b) as a “reservoir of resources” for processes of communicative action (1998c:335; also 1990:135) ; (c) as a stabilizing mechanism for social order (1998c:240, 245); and, (d) as an integral component within ongoing learning processes (1998c:335).

This communicative structuring of lifeworld involves a spiral learning process. As participants work through a problem they develop, confirm and renew cultural knowledge (meanings), group memberships (expectations) and personal identities (skills, competencies). Meanings, expectations and competencies become resources for solving future problems and issues. This learning process demonstrates that: an emancipatory potential resides within everyday discursive practice; arguments are fallible learning processes which open thematized lifeworld horizons for analysis and for reaching understanding; social actions which are discursively linked in practices of reaching understanding can become complex, layered networks of interactions; communicative action and lifeworld are complementary concepts; and communicative action and lifeworld are central to Habermas' critical theory of society.

Habermas' theoretical architectonics is used as a framework for understanding how everyday communicative practices provide the normative resources for an emancipatory potential. He locates the normative content of everyday communicative practices within the presuppositions participants must share in order to reach agreement. Communicative action, then, is the original source of normativity (1990:201, 202). Argumentation, a more reflective form of communicative action, borrows its normative content from this everyday practice. Presuppositions become more visible within discursive practices. These presuppositions facilitate or make the communicative engagement possible. In order to "convince" another or others about something on the basis of good reasons, participants must accept certain assumptions (e.g., universal egalitarianism). As a result of the recursive learning process within argumentation, these normative resources can be found on different levels: for example, within lifeworld background; within parliamentary procedure; within the judicial system; and within institutionalized forms of scientific and academic debate.

Habermas' theory of communicative action, and his theory of speech acts, provide an explanation for how social actors link up their interactions. Reaching consensus based on reasons provides a normative base for continued action.

Obligations for continued action and action coordination are attached to the “gentle” and “persuasive” force of reasons. Argumentation allows communicative action to continue, without the use of influence or force. Habermas suggests that argumentation becomes a “court of appeal” for resolving contested issues consensually when everyday routines or strategic force no longer work (1984b:17). When there is agreement, participants generally assume obligations for the “sequel of interactions” (e.g., “rely on a promise”, “obey an order”). Reaching understanding therefore can coordinate actions (1998c:198-199).

Habermas’ theory of social evolution highlights the importance of lifeworld rationalization for expanding the rational potential of everyday communicative processes, including those within family. It signifies the structural differentiation of lifeworld into three background components (culture, society, personality). All three are subject to a discursive practice in which participants are responsible for their own (interpretive) actions. For example, social actors have to use their own interpretive abilities to establish new social bonds and normative arrangements. This expansion of individual responsibility for action coordination has been accompanied by greater demands for its use.

Functionally integrated subsystems, steered by language-like media, have differentiated out of the society component of lifeworld to relieve the pressure on lifeworld’s communicative practices. Three points are important here. First, system resources (money and power) cannot take over lifeworld reproductive functions without pathological consequences. Lifeworld can only be reproduced communicatively, argumentatively. Second, lifeworld cannot directly influence system. Functionally integrated, self-steering subsystems view communicative actors, their lifeworlds and their communicative practices as parts of their environments (e.g., for exchanges). As discussed in the next chapter, lifeworld does have access to system through the political subsystem’s dependence upon lifeworld sources of legitimation. And third, the registry of resources available within modern society for social integration, within the lifeworld-system interchange, must

be re-aligned. System must be subject to a form of governance which is responsive to lifeworld concerns and interests.

Two final themes draw this chapter to a close: the individual-society relationship, and the social action – social order – social change dynamic. Habermas' view of the individual-society relationship is fairly straightforward. It flows out of his theories of lifeworld rationalization and of communicative action. Based on a model of intermeshing lifeworld components, the individual-society relationship is dynamic and interactive. Both the individual and society are lifeworld components, as is culture. All three, Habermas stresses, are interdependent. He writes that "[o]rganisms" become "persons" "only if, and to the extent that, they are socialized, that is invested with and structured by social and cultural contexts of meaning". In other words, personality structures are entwined with society and culture (1998c:251-252). We are socialized subjects only to the extent we are embedded within "group solidarities" and "institutional orders". Through our communicative practices, individual life-projects are linked with other individual life-projects, and these in turn are conjoined with larger, collective forms of life. According to the theory of communicative action and of lifeworld rationalization, our interconnectedness is inescapable.

Furthermore, a communicative understanding of the individual-society relationship demonstrates the fundamental importance of consensually coordinating our interactions. For problems of social order, we need moral-practical solutions. Habermas' model of the paradoxical nature of the lifeworld-system interchange and his model of boundary conflicts clearly demonstrate this need. Communicatively achieved consensus appears to offer our best hope for bringing about change. Some implications with respect to the modern nation state and family will be addressed in the next two chapters.

The social action – social order – social change dynamic presented in Figure 1.1 is an analytic model of Habermas' theory of communicative action. The discussion of Habermas' social philosophy, social evolution, lifeworld-system interchange, communicative action, as well as the example, clearly demonstrate the

importance of this action – order – change dynamic within his thinking. In this chapter, the social action – social order – social change dynamic was used to show that Habermas' lifeworld -system model of interchange and model of boundary conflicts does not delimit lifeworld's emancipatory potential. System need not silence the voice of reason. Within our everyday communicative sociations we have access to the normative resources necessary for establishing a better way of life. Understanding the individual-society(-culture) relationship as discursive and interactive reveals an openness to social change.

In the following two chapters, the action – order– change dynamic is used to understand, from a Habermasian perspective, the two remaining sociological issues, social order and social change. Chapter Three focuses on social order, primarily through a discussion of the modern (western) nation state, solidarity and communicative power. In Chapter Four, social change is analyzed in relation to the contribution of the public sphere and family to the potential for emancipation within everyday life.

CHAPTER THREE

HABERMAS AND SOCIAL ORDER: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION AND SOLIDARITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Establishing and maintaining social order in modern societies, Habermas claims, requires the impartiality and inclusiveness of moral-practical solutions. Addressing societal or global issues and conflicts from a moral-practical perspective means that everyone affected or concerned must participate in addressing and resolving them, and that any solution (e.g., agreement) must be based on good reasons about which everyone agrees. Only practical discourse, a form of argumentation which is oriented to resolving normative disagreements, and which is grounded in ideal and pragmatic presuppositions, can establish a procedural mechanism for achieving just solutions impartially. The universal nature of the normative demands (e.g., ideal suppositions) underlying the moral point of view within practical discourse can be understood as a necessary condition for framing a moral order. Such a discursively produced moral order would be characterized by both universal justice and by empathetic solidarity – an appealing thought for everyday life.

The appeal of a social order characterized by universal equality and solidaric responsibility crystalizes around the ongoing demand for social integration and regulation within modern pluralistic and secular societies. Also, the urgent need for establishing democratic governance over globalized and denationalized networks of economic interests and markets intensifies this demand. The normative implications for “a just and peaceful cosmopolitan order” (1994b:22) are obvious:

understanding and cooperation versus influence, coercion and force. For example, peaceful cross-cultural relations require discursive practices which are characterized by relations of reciprocity and symmetry. Participants must be willing to learn from others, from strangers. Of course this appeal must be tempered by the gap between the ideal notion of a “spatiotemporally unlimited community” (2003d:104) of equals and the realities of everyday life. Empirical realities notwithstanding, the inclusive, rational and impartial basis of moral argumentation can be used as a reflective foil for evaluating the real discursive practices through which everyday social action is coordinated, conflict is resolved and social order is established and maintained.

However, as a mechanism for integrating and regulating social interaction within modern pluralistic and secular societies, morality (moral discourse) is subject to certain limitations: a motivational deficit, and real discursive practices. On the one hand, moral discourse has limited motivational power. Good reasons alone have weak motivational potential. On the other hand, real discourse, situated in concrete forms of life, can only approximate the ideal conditions which ground moral discourse. Finding the time to give equal consideration to everyone’s interests, for instance, is a very demanding requisite for reaching agreement within everyday discourse. Habermas contends that moral discourse requires the supportive resources of a rationalized lifeworld which must meet it “halfway” (1990:109, 207).

The action coordinating capacities of democratically generated positive law can accommodate the demotivated and decontextualized limitations of morality. Within modern secular and pluralistic societies, legitimate legal orders require a “procedure of deliberative politics”, a procedure which offers the promise of “reasonable agreement” and of “legitimizing force” (1997:74-75). And, only radical democracy can generate a “normal practice” – an inclusive and rational practice – capable of establishing life-conditions “worthy of human beings” (1997:92). According to Habermas, the extent to which radical democracy becomes an everyday normal experience is a measure of a political community’s civilized nature

and its civilizing capacity (1997:92). Radical democracy holds the potential for establishing and maintaining legitimate and just social formations.

Habermas contends that western societies have the potential – a “second chance” in fact – to civilize the world. The first chance was squandered through “[i]mperialist domination” and the violent spread of “industrial culture”, for instance. Two dramatic and intensive consequences impacting all societies have devolved: the unrelenting development of a materialist world culture, which seems to have become an “alternativeless force”; and, “a new kind of vicious cycle” of domination characterized by the “progressive anonymity” of systemic imperatives, power and money (1994b:95, 96). But, it is the economy (e.g., money) which has become the primary pacemaker of social evolution within contemporary social formations. Unlike the economy, the legitimacy and authority of the state remains linked (e.g., periodic elections) to the lifeworld. Radical democratic practices must be galvanized within the communicative interchange between lifeworld and system.

Given that every nation is now confronted by systemic forces – a money driven economy and a power driven (political) administration, fulfilling this second chance will require a solidaric practice capable of effective and “intelligent action”. Habermas maintains western rationalism, with its capacity for self-critical examination and self-transformation, has the normative means for another, but emancipatory, civilizing event. Europe, and the West generally, have the capacity to move beyond Eurocentrism or Occidentalism and imperialism for example. Whether inegalitarian and oppressive life-conditions can be modified or even changed (1994b:95-96; 1996b:507) depends upon the solidaric practice generated by the productive force of radically democratic communicative practices.

According to Habermas, the practice of solidarity, which in modern complex and democratic societies depends upon “rational institutions” such as elected parliaments, upon public spaces for discussing concerns and issues (e.g., the media) and upon a liberal cultural background which fosters communicative action, requires communicative practices which are both enabling and inclusive (1994b:96, 97). Habermas’ discursive model of social order, therefore, is dependent upon a

communicatively produced and reproduced solidarity. The solidarity underlying the “public struggle” for the “best form” of democracy provides us with a glimpse of utopian possibilities for the common good – of all humanity. More specifically, only through the public communication embodied in radical democratic practices can we achieve “true pluralism” (1994b:92-93), not just nationally but globally. Universal inclusivity requires dialogic-empathetic openness to other ways of life and other traditions.

Radical democracy becomes a normative reference point or benchmark for understanding Habermas’ philosophy of morality (discourse ethics) as it pertains to modern forms of social order. Very simply, an ethics of discourse grounds moral norms within communicative practices (1988-89:38). Building upon the theory of communicative action (2003d:1), Habermas’ discourse theory proffers a theory of radical democracy within which the voice of reason – the rational potential of argumentation – is central. He argues that the rational potential of everyday talk must be able to *speak*, if you will, to problems concerning the normative regulation of social life. When social order is understood in terms of Habermas’ communication theory, stable and legitimate processes and patterns of action coordination must be grounded in ‘good reasons’ about which everyone agrees. And, participants themselves, including strangers, must decide on the best normative framework for their peaceful coexistence.

According to Habermas’ discourse theory, deliberative politics must link the administrative state to the lifeworld in such a way that the concerns and issues of everyday experience can have formative influence within political discussions, policy making and decision making (e.g., social programs, laws). Habermas believes that emancipated life-conditions – the “vanishing point” of his critical theory of society – must be generated through an “acceptable balance” of lifeworld and system resources (1997:92). Lifeworld solidarity, which is a scarce resource in modern pluralistic societies, must be able to counter the colonizing tendencies of systemic imperatives, money and administrative power. Habermas believes the solution is to be found in radical democratic political formations and practices driven by a

lifeworld centered procedural and deliberative process of filtering problems, forming opinions and making decisions.

Radical democracy offers a rational-legal political framework for consensually coordinating actions, for peacefully resolving conflicts, and for establishing and maintaining stable, legitimate and just relations within modern complex and pluralistic societies. It also offers the best hope for global governance within the current constellation of nation-states. Socio-political formations which are structured upon and which are supportive of radical democratic principles and cultural practices hold promise for the self-realization of a not misspent life-project (e.g., individual biography) and for the self-determination of a non-distorted life-form (e.g., civilized society). And, within the developing postnational matrix of systemic networks, radically democratic political formations also hold promise for bringing globalized economic networks under the purview of a cosmopolitan form of democratic governance, and for leveling social stratification – for social justice. Only radical democracy can generate the normative basis (e.g., communicative power, solidarity) for establishing a just social order or an emancipated form of life.

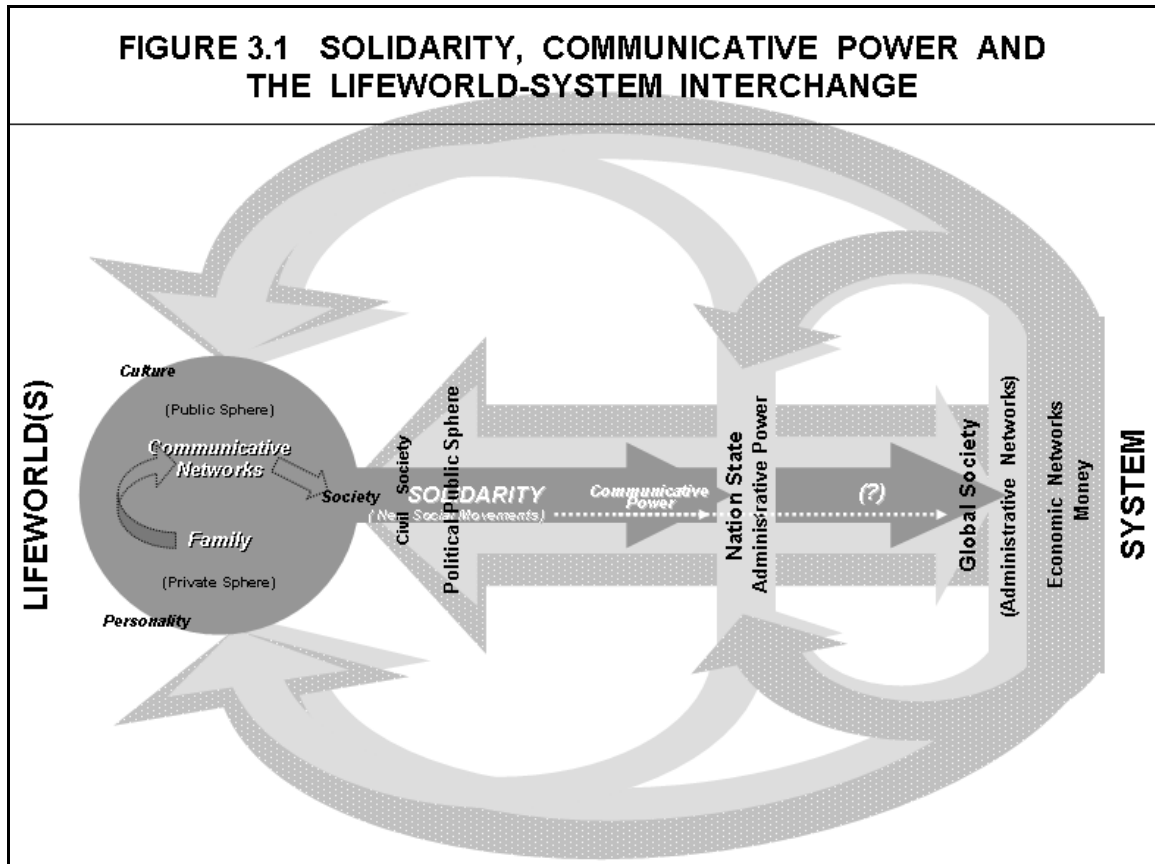
Habermas' discourse ethics and discourse theory of democracy provide an analytic framework for examining social order, the second of the three sociological issues discussed in this research. Using the theoretical foundation established in Chapter Two, Chapter Three presents a stylized and thematic overview of the nature of social order and of the potential for establishing a better way of life. Discourse theory conceptualizes our rational, voluntary and public discursive practices within the political public sphere as a productive force for orienting action, for generating solidarity, and for influencing system. This chapter is concerned, primarily, with the normative conditions which facilitate the productive capacity of practical discourse and the generation of solidarity. Three central themes are used to examine the rational and procedural nature of practical discourse: impartialness, embeddedness, and openness. A few qualifying observations about the lifeworld-system interchange are highlighted below.

3.2 QUALIFICATIONS

Figure 3.1, an adaptation of Figure 2.6, depicts some of the central features of Habermas' discourse ethics and discourse theory of democracy. The pictorial representation of the lifeworld-system interchange captures the heart of radical democratic political formations – citizens discursively working out how they want to organize their way of life. It reveals the dynamic flow of solidarity, administrative power and money between lifeworld and system. Importantly for this research, it shows the path that everyday communicative impulses must take if they are to sensitize a functionally integrated system to lifeworld's needs and concerns. Before discussing Habermas' discourse ethics, a few qualifying remarks about the lifeworld-system interchange are required.

For Habermas, modern social life is characterized by several conditions. First, there are multiple "individual life projects" and "collective forms of life" (1993:150), both within nation states and within our global community of societies. Second, "socialized individuals" decide how they choose to live. Although they remain significant within individual life-contexts, contemporary decisions are no longer predetermined on the basis of tradition or religious beliefs. Third, modern social orders, especially those in the West, require a procedural mechanism for intersubjective and discursive decision making. In pluralistic societies, procedural decision making has become a means by which individuals persuade each other regarding the coordination of their activities (1993:150).

Discourse theory points towards a "higher-level intersubjectivity" within two spheres of publically centered communicative practices: "the institutionalized deliberations of parliamentary bodies"; and "the informal networks of the public sphere". These two spheres of discursive practice are described by Habermas as "arenas" of "subjectless modes of communication". It is within these public arenas or spheres of communication that "issues and problems" concerning "society as a whole" are honed and debated (1998a:248-249).



Habermas' discourse theory of democracy distinguishes civil society – “the social underpinning of autonomous publics” – from both the state and the economy. This distinction has significant implications regarding the distribution and balancing of the three social forces capable of integrating and regulating modern societies. In respect to the lifeworld-system interchange, discourse theory presents a “normative demand” for rebalancing solidarity, administrative power and money. A discourse model of the interchange conceptualizes solidarity as developing within “autonomous public spheres”, “legally institutionalized procedures of democratic deliberation and decision making”, as well as everyday communicative actions. The former two are especially important sources for developing solidaric relations which can stand, independently, over against both money and administrative power (1998a:249).

Lifeworld's core areas, the private sphere and the public sphere (see Figures 2.3, 2.4), are complementary. Yet, they are differentiated by the extent of publicness within each action complex. Intimacy, the private sphere's central feature, provides a form of protection from "publicity". The life-histories of individuals are connected through "face-to-face interactions", typically among partners, "relatives, friends, acquaintances". The public sphere recruits participants from the private sphere (1996b:354). However, the public sphere is not easily conceptualized in terms of social order (e.g, organizational structure, membership). It is best understood as a "social space" produced through individuals' communicative practices (1996b:360). Both spheres are communicatively reproduced.

The two subsystems, economy and political administration, are legally institutionalized within the lifeworld, or more specifically, within the societal dimension of lifeworld. Law acts as a "transformer". It transforms ordinary language into a mode understandable by system. The everyday communicative messages, formulated within both the private and public lifeworld spheres, are converted into "a form in which these messages can ... be received by ... special [nonlinguistic] codes" money and power. System 'speaks' back to lifeworld in the same fashion. Thus, law circulates everyday language "throughout society" (1996b:354), and therefore between lifeworld and system.

Habermas has described the lifeworld-system communicative interchange in terms of a "core-periphery axis", where the political system is the core or center, and lifeworld's public sphere is the "real periphery". Within democracies, the center of communicative sociations, the political system, is comprised of administrative (government, judicial courts, police) and parliamentary (legislatures, political parties, elections) systems. The "parliamentary complex" is oriented to articulating and addressing social problems. Democratic cores are polyarchival; power is invested in many individuals. Organizational complexity limits the ability of parliamentary orders to engage in action (e.g., time constraints, political and ideological pressure). Parliamentary organizations must, by virtue of their discursive practices and their

elected status, remain “open for perceiving and thematizing social problems” (1996b:354-356).

Consequently the modern social dynamic can be characterized as two action orders: one (lifeworld) communicatively integrated; and the other (system) functionally integrated. Ultimately, the nature of everyday life-experience is determined by the balance between these two orders. For Habermas, the communicative action – order (– change) dynamic, the coordination of interactions communicatively and consensually, provides the best hope for assessing the emancipatory potential within modern, complex societies.

3.3 DISCOURSE ETHICS

3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Habermas refers to discourse ethics as a “program of philosophical justification” (1990:43). His ethics of discourse attempts to ground “moral norms in communication” (1990:195), or, more specifically, in “a procedure of moral argumentation” (1990:197) which he refers to as practical discourse. While communicative action accounts for the whole spectrum of validity claims (e.g., truth, rightness, truthfulness), discourse ethics focuses on claims regarding the normative regulation of everyday life, on rightness claims. Herein lies the connection to everyday forms of social order. Discourse ethics – a philosophy of morality – aims at establishing a legitimate and impartial procedure for judging moral norms. A theory of morality must “explain and ground” what Habermas refers to as “the moral point of view” (1990:211). The moral point of view is a procedure through which problems of social order can be addressed and resolved rationally, that is, within argumentation. Although Habermas acknowledges that his program is, more accurately, a ‘discourse theory of morality’, he tends to emphasize ‘discourse ethics’ since the latter enjoys common usage.

Since the “fundamental” issue addressed by morality is the legitimate regulation of social interaction (2003d:261), the basic “outline” of Habermas’ philosophy of morality is delimited by “the conditions” underlying “impartial judgements” (and applications) about “practical questions” concerning our

interpersonal relationships. And, for Habermas, impartial judgements about practical everyday problems require discourses oriented to reaching understanding based solely on good reasons (1990:43). Moral-practical issues, issues about which everyone has a concern, Habermas states, “can be decided rationally” within practical discourse (1993:31-32; 104). They can be discursively settled or resolved in everyone’s interest. However, besides moral questions, other questions – both pragmatic or ethical – can also be subject to rational discourses (1990:108) and to rational criticism (1998a:98; 1998a:vii “Introduction”). Even processes of negotiation and compromise can be (and are) subject to the conditions of rationality (1998a:217, 246). While this chapter focuses upon the rational basis of (more complex forms) higher levels of intersubjectivity (e.g., public spheres, nation state), the next chapter examines simpler forms of interaction at the level of family. The key idea here is that legitimate forms of social order require a rational base or core.

Habermas believes the rational basis – the “basic substance” – of morality can be derived from the normative content of the necessary conditions for communicative action and for argumentation (1993:67). On the one hand, these conditions, or ideal pragmatic presuppositions – “openness, equal rights, truthfulness and absence of coercion” (1993:32), can only establish the practice of argumentation. Morality, it seems, has a “motivational deficit”: “there is no direct route from discursively achieved consensus to actions” (1998a:35). Ideal suppositions cannot motivate or obligate participants to act rationally. Habermas therefore talks about the need for a rationalized lifeworld to meet a universalized morality “halfway” (1998a:252; 1990:207).

On the other hand, ideal suppositions do not represent the content of a concrete, future way of life or of an ideal society. These presuppositions are “procedural conditions” (1993:31-32). And, when these conditions are *sufficiently* fulfilled, participants are oriented toward problem solving moral discourses, towards practical discourse. For Habermas, the procedure of practical discourse is “an exacting form of argumentative decision making” – utilizing the presuppositions of argumentation – through which moral issues “can be judged impartially” (1990:198)

by everyone concerned. A just and appropriate normative regulation of everyday life, must be, and can only be, achieved by participants themselves.

Because of the complexity of modern social formations, practical discourse provides a much needed moral perspective – a “moral point of view” – for consensually, therefore peacefully, resolving action coordinating problems (1990:198). The rational and procedural nature of practical discourse makes impartial and inclusive outcomes (agreements) possible. Three general, intersubjective and highly interconnected features of this procedure are outlined below. Moral-practical decision making practices can be characterized by their (1) impartialness, (2) embeddedness, and (3) openness. Impartialness reflects the importance of justice, solidarity and law. Embeddedness emphasizes the interconnection between moral (inclusive) communities and ethical communities. Openness underscores the dynamic nature of argumentation and the potential for change. These concepts are used sociologically, in order to examine some of the implications of Habermas’ discourse ethics for modern forms of social order and social change.

3.3.2 IMPARTIALNESS

3.3.2.1 A MORAL POINT OF VIEW

Instead of a ‘God’s eye point of view’ which objectifies the world (1998a:7,34), and instead of an ethical point of view oriented to ‘*my*’ self-understanding (e.g., egocentrism) or to ‘*our*’ self-understanding (e.g., ethnocentrism) (1998a:26), Habermas’ philosophy of morality proffers an intersubjective and universalizing “moral point of view” (1998a:7). It is the “standpoint” (1993:48) social actors must assume if they are to establish an impartial normative order. Impartiality, for example, demands that all participants’ “needs and interests” be heard and considered equally (1993:48-49). When participants are open to other voices in this way, they are assuming an “impartial standpoint” (1993:49), through which normative agreements are fashioned. Supposedly, egocentrism and ethnocentrism are marginalized, if not bracketed.

The moral standpoint or perspective obligates participants within argumentation to engage in an “idealizing enlargement of their interpretive perspectives” (1998a:57). For Habermas, an idealizing enlargement of perspectives means that “everyone is required to take the perspective of everyone else”. An “interlocking of perspectives”, necessary for rational agreement, can only occur through a projection of self “into the understandings of self and world of all others”. The resulting “ideally extended ‘we-perspective’” becomes the standpoint from which everyone “can test in common” whether a contested norm should become a “shared practice”. The “core of a generalizable interest” – a norm, the basis of an impartial agreement – emerges only after successive abstractions (e.g., universalizing extensions) (1998a:58).

The moral point of view permits participants in practical discourse to abstract beyond pragmatic and ethical reasons, to moral reasons. It enables the impartial judgement of “moral norms and principles” (1998a:81). For judgements to be inclusive and impartial, they must be “demotivated” and “decontextualized” (1990:106). For example, moral argumentation requires participants to abstract from everyday motives (e.g., seeking happiness and well-being), and from taken for granted normative standards and institutional practices (e.g., heterosexual marriage) (1993:118ff). Abstractive demands such as these mean that only very general (abstract) normative standards will garner an agreement by everyone concerned (e.g., human rights). Habermas states that,

The moral point of view calls for the extension and reversibility of interpretive perspectives so that alternative viewpoints and interest structures and differences in individual self-understandings and worldviews are not effaced but are given full play in discourse. (1993:58)

The rational nature of practical discourse (e.g., the better argument and good reasons, ideal presuppositions) makes these abstractions possible.

Recently, Habermas has outlined three theoretical steps for explaining or justifying the moral viewpoint (1998a:41ff). First, he identifies the *discourse principle* (‘D’) as the basic “condition” which all justified (“valid”) norms would have to fulfill: “Only those norms can claim validity that could meet with the acceptance

of all concerned in practical discourse". Given the demanding presuppositions of argumentation, any agreement achieved in this manner is based on good reasons. Six observations are important in regards to 'D'. (a) The highly abstract nature of the principle means that it refers to "action norms in general". (b) 'D' therefore remains "neutral" to the differentiation between morality and law. It can account for both. (c) This neutrality means the "type of argumentation" to be used is left open (e.g., moral, ethical). (d) The interconnection between moral argumentation and the "substantive background consensus" is also left open (e.g., lifeworld certitudes) (1998a:41-42).

(e) 'D' provides Habermas with a solution to the problem of social order in modern pluralistic societies. Members of a moral community face a conundrum. Confronted with competing conceptions of the good life, how is it possible to regulate relationships peacefully without a unifying and "shared ethos"? Traditional obligations and convictions root individuals within well established boundaries (e.g., "family", "tribe", "city", "nation"). Without traditional (universal) moorings such as religious beliefs or metaphysical guarantees, members must "derive their normative orientations from themselves". The "common practice" they share is rational discourse (1998a:39-41). Only from the impartial perspective of a rational procedure of argumentation can moral-practical questions be resolved, with everyone's agreement.

(f) Habermas also distinguishes justification discourses regarding moral norms from application discourses in terms of the discourse principle ('D'). On the one hand, the discourse principle assumes the form of a principle of universalization when justifying moral norms. It becomes a "moral principle". On the other hand, the principle of appropriateness supersedes the universalization principle when norms are applied to specific situations. "The two principles" – the universalization principle and the principle of appropriateness, Habermas states, "express different aspects of the moral principle, which requires that the interests of each person be given equal consideration" (1996b:109).

Habermas' second step for explaining the moral viewpoint is to conceptualize the *universalization principle* ('U') as a "rule of argumentation". It specifies the process for normative justification: "A norm is valid when the foreseeable consequences and side effects of its general observance for the interests and value-orientations of each individual could be jointly accepted by all concerned without coercion". He goes on to clarify three specific features of this principle. (a) The reference to "interests and value orientations" emphasizes the important role of "pragmatic and ethical" reasons within real discourse. As much as discourse abstracts from lifeworld, it also is firmly embedded within lifeworld. For example, reasons have their origin within everyday experience and are resourced from the background of lifeworld certainties for use within argumentation. (b) There is a strong emphasis upon "reciprocal perspective taking", as indicated by "of each" and "jointly accepted by all". Revisionary stances require "empathy" and "interpretive intervention" within participants' "self-understanding". And (c), the use of "uncoerced joint acceptance" denotes the importance of agent-independent as opposed to agent-relative meaning and reasons (1998a:42-43). As well, when everyone observes a norm, 'U' "requires sensitivity to the results and consequences" (1990:206). Within moral discourse, symmetry and reciprocity must prevail.

A central "task" discourse ethics undertakes is to derive the universalization principle from the rational presuppositions of argumentation. Habermas' position is fairly clear. The universalization principle of moral discourse reflects the necessary and ideal presuppositions of argumentation in general. When a social actor accepts these "suppositions of rationality" (e.g., "openness, equal rights, truthfulness and absence of coercion"), she also accepts, albeit "implicitly", the "procedural conditions" reflected in the rule of argumentation (1993:31, 32).

In the third and final step Habermas claims that the principle of universalization must be "useful" to participants. And to be useful, only norms capable of universal agreement must be selected: for example, "norms expressing human rights". Habermas also points out that the basic pragmatic presuppositions

of discourse have no moral compunction. They cannot directly motivate action. For instance, the ideal presupposition inclusivity simply means “unrestricted” access (1998a:44). Ideal presuppositions are procedural conditions or “enabling conditions” within discursive practices. What then does motivate? Habermas suggests that moral obligations attach to the justified norms for which reasoned arguments have been made (1998a:45), and to the feelings and evaluations associated with moral abrogations (1998a:4-5).

Very importantly, the rule of argumentation (‘U’), reflecting as it does the underlying and idealizing presuppositions of discourse, identifies a “residual normative substance” within modern “posttraditional” societies. The residue Habermas is referring to can be found in the “formal features” of both communicative action and argumentation(1998a:45), features which form part of our cultural, institutional and motivational background. Argumentation is a universal practice, “found in all cultures and societies”, within “institutionalized form[s]” and within “informal practice[s]”. The legal order established by constitutional democracies is one example. A married couple deciding how to share household responsibilities would be another. Habermas believes moral-practical problem solving has no functional equivalent (1998a:43). Argumentation, and therefore moral discourse and the moral point of view, is universalistic and nonsubstitutable in nature.

Habermas, in a retrospective comment, does clarify the kinds of questions or issues for which the universalization principle and the discourse principle can be operationalized (1996b:108ff; 1998a:46). On the one hand, the universalization principle is a “more comprehensive principle of discourse”, and is, therefore, tailored for addressing moral issues. On the other hand, the discourse principle, which is more abstract, can be used to address a broader range of questions, not just moral questions (1998a:46). ‘D’ can absorb a wide range of “issues”, “contributions” and “reasons” (1996b:108). Two examples Habermas uses are parliamentary deliberations and court procedures (1998a:43). In fact, he introduces the principle of democracy to explain the underlying legitimacy of legislative processes

(1996b:121). The next section examines the legitimacy of practical discourse as a model for moral-practical problem solving, especially in regards to the principle of democracy and legislative decision making.

3.3.2.2 PRACTICAL DISCOURSE

Habermas describes practical discourse as a “liberating” practice (“arrangement”) which enables participants to be convinced by good reasons, “to be affected by actor-independent reasons”. As a form of rational discourse (“the model”), practical discourse provides a public and communicative space for “openness”, “equal consideration”, “uncoerciveness”, “transparency”, and, based on these idealizing contributions, “the better argument”. Being open to the better argument permits “an exacting kind of impartiality” in which the opinions of others are viewed as being as important as one’s own (2003d:270).

Two consequences follow from the “idealizing anticipation” of rational agreement within practical discourse. First, moral insight into social life devolves from the equal consideration of free floating “reasons and information”. Second, the will (i.e., the propensity or capacity for decisions, for action) is freed of external or heteronomous constraints; it becomes autonomous (2003d:269-270). Only a will that is open to *moral insight* is truly autonomous: “that is, [has] the capacity to act in accordance with self-imposed laws” (1993:118-119). However, autonomy, for Habermas, does not mean isolation or independence. Individuation, yes; isolation, no. Underlying autonomy stands universal egalitarianism. The independence of each individual is made possible through mutual recognition which also is possible only by everyone’s independence (1993:43). Habermas’ discourse ethics clearly conceives of autonomy as “intersubjective”: “the free actualization of the personality of one individual depends on the actualization of freedom for all” (1990:207). Pragmatically, intersubjective dependence is a fundamental requisite for identity formation and for normatively organizing all interpersonal relationships, from a family project to a cosmopolitan order.

Insight devolves from practical reflection when participants shift their focus from the subjective world of “privileged access”, to “an intersubjectively shared

social world” of “shared experiences, practices and forms of life”. Reflexive insight makes background certainties uncertain (1998a:25). Within discourse, the implicit becomes explicit. Habermas understands the concept *insight* to mean that decision making is justified by good reasons. Decisions (e.g., will formation) are grounded in reasons, the cognitive content of morality and of rational argumentation generally. Different perspectives – pragmatic, ethical and moral – address different questions and lead to different answers (reasons). However, pragmatic, ethical and moral reasons bind the will differently.

Pragmatic reasons are conditioned by personal preferences and goals and are subject to the judgement (e.g., strategic) of the social agent holding them. Personal preferences and goals are definitely agent-relative. However, a “disposition or preference” is not the same as insight. Habermas explains that insight, “consists of an intersubjectively shared know-how that has gained acceptance in the lifeworld and has ‘proved’ itself in practice. Ethical and moral insight operate at this level. As the shared possession of a cultural form of life, it enjoys ‘objectivity’ in virtue of its social diffusion and acceptance”. Pragmatic questions from a first person singular perspective – oriented by the “epistemic authority” of the purposively acting agent – cannot account for this intersubjectivity (1998a:25, 26).

Ethical questions originate within a first person perspective which has two dimensions: a first person singular and a first person plural. Questions arising from the former are concerned with “who I am and who I would like to be, or how I should lead my life.” Questions emanating from the latter refer to “how we understand ourselves as members of our community, how we should orient our lives, or what is best for us in the long run and all things considered”. Questions addressed in the first person plural have to do with “a shared ethos”. Individual life-projects are “always already embedded in intersubjectively shared traditions and forms of life”. Where individual preferences and goals are “simply given” in the pragmatic perspective, within the ethical perspective they are debatable. By reflecting upon what is of “intrinsic value” for everyone in our “shared social world”, my self-

understanding becomes subject to “reasoned change”. Members of a community are communicatively socialized into a common culture because the general and valued elements of that shared culture “become sedimented” in a common “evaluative vocabulary”. An ethical point of view therefore judges “value orientations” and the “self-understanding of persons or groups” (1998a:25-27). Ethical reasons, like pragmatic reasons, are agent-relative. They are interconnected to the “interests and self-understanding” of individuals (1998a:31).

The ethical perspective leads to the clarification of “clinical questions” which are concerned with “the successful, or not misspent life”. These questions gain their relevance from within “individual” life-histories or within a specific “collective” way of life. Practical reflection remains tied to the “strong evaluations” of self-understanding. Habermas points out that, “How we conduct our lives is determined more or less by how we understand ourselves”. Life-directions are derived from our “interpretive” self-understanding. Since the free will is manifested in “a conscious plan of life”, “authenticity” – manifested in the authentic life – becomes a “higher-level validity claim”, similar to claims of “truthfulness” within expressive speech acts (1998a:27).

Finally, the moral point of view arbitrates normative disagreements, or judges norms (1998a:26). Within practical discourse, moral agents become “co-legislators” in the cooperative and discursive pursuit of a generalizable solution to a contested norm (1998a:31). As co-legislators, participants adopt “an intersubjectively extended perspective” in order to determine whether the norm under discussion could be accepted (“count as generalizable”) by everyone. Instead of being self-determined, the will is self-legislated in cooperation with everyone else affected or concerned. Self-legislated moral reasons “*interpenetrate*” with the will. Moral reasons are therefore agent-independent. Although a heteronomous will can be motivated by moral reasons, it is not autonomous until freed from its ties to “preexisting interests and context-dependent value-orientations”. The moral point of view subjects external influences such as these to “critical evaluation” (1998a:32).

According to Habermas, “the moral point of view can only be realized under conditions of communication that ensure that everyone tests the acceptability of a norm, implemented in a general practice, also from the perspective of his own understanding of himself and his world” (1998a:33). The dynamics of moral discourse therefore creates tremendous cognitive, motivational and organizational demands on participants. Modern law is able to redress these demands. Law, or the rule of law, creates social orders in which legal subjects retain their independence (e.g., autonomous self-determination) and at the same time become subject to enforceable compliance.

3.3.2.3 SECULARIZED MORALITY AND LAW

With the pluralism of modern forms of life, with the increasing individualization of life-projects, and with the differentiation between life-forms and life-projects, the normative demand for regulating our everyday interactions has intensified, dramatically. In order to meet this demand, Habermas argues, morality, of necessity, had to become secularized. The advantage of a secularized morality is that it provides an impartial perspective for problem solving. The impartiality of secularized moral-practical discourses and solutions allows participants to transcend traditional and local forms of life and identities. For instance, adopting a moral point of view loosens or decenters individual and social identities, identities which were traditionally bounded by “an overarching social ethos” (1993:47).

Habermas suggests that an “autonomous morality” and “enacted law” are co-originary. Historically, both appeared at the same time as the traditional, religious “social ethos” began to shatter. As this all encompassing background ethos broke apart, law, morality and ethical life became differentiated from each other. On the one hand, legal, moral and ethical questions began to separate within cultural knowledge. And, on the other hand, positive law, customs and habits became detached. While legal orders (institutional complexes) developed around positive law, customs and habits were “devalued” to “conventions”. Law and morality, however, address the “same problems”. Both are concerned with the problem of social order, and, therefore, with resolving conflicts legitimately and consensually

(1996b:106). Nevertheless, morality and law approach problems differently. While secularized morality is a “form of cultural knowledge”, law is also institutional and therefore embodies a “binding character” (1996b:106).

According to Habermas, the normative conditions underlying discourse (e.g., ideal presuppositions) highlight “two salient features” of a secularized morality. First, secular morality is “universalistic”, as well as “egalitarian”, in respect to the justification of normative agreements (1993:47). And, second, secular morality is “formal and empty” concerning the content of those agreements (1993:47). Participants in moral discourse must determine the nature of the normative agreements they use to organize their interactions and resolve conflicts. However, in modern pluralistic societies, the need for rational, universal consensus becomes a limitation. Political decisions involve a broad range of needs and discourses. Obligations for continuing action sequences must be grounded in a rationalized lifeworld. As a mechanism for integrating society, morality has obvious limits.

Modern positive law can compensate for the limitations inherent within secular morality. Habermas understands positive law to be a “functional complement” to an autonomous morality (1996b:452). Due to the nature of law, legal subjects do not have to make moral judgements about a wide range of everyday activities. Legal subjects are “unburdened” of certain “demands” relevant to moral agency (1996b:114). Habermas identifies three fundamental demands which the moral point of view makes of social agents in practical discourse: a cognitive demand, a motivational demand and an organizational demand. Law addresses these demands by resolving a specific problem associated with each one: cognitive indeterminacy, motivational uncertainty and accountability, respectively.

First, moral agents must resolve action conflicts for themselves because a postconventional morality (e.g., norming norms) provides only a form – a “procedure” – for “impartially” resolving problems. It does not supply the content. Moral agents must “form their own judgements”. Thus discourses of justification and of application may “overtax the individual’s analytic capacity”. Law can absorb

this cognitive indeterminacy by relieving individuals of decision making responsibility. Legislatures and courts, for instance, relieve the cognitive demands upon moral agents for deciding which norm will become law and which interpretation is appropriate (“judicious”), respectively (1996b:114-115).

Second, moral agents are expected to be motivated to act. They must have the “strength of will” to reach a consensus about problems or conflicts, and to act on the basis of moral insight. Motivational uncertainty manifests itself when reaching consensus may require moral agents to act against personal and “immediate interests”. The coercive nature of positive law brings the possibility of sanctions for non-conformative behavior. Sanctions are superimposed upon normative expectations thereby compensating for the possibility of a “weakness of will” (1996b:115-116). As well, motivational deficits raise the issue of reasonable expectations for action. Universal (e.g., everyone’s) compliance with a valid norm is difficult to guarantee. Law is effective here also, for, as Habermas writes, “Valid norms represent reasonable expectations only if they can actually be enforced against deviant behavior” (1996b:116).

The third problem, accountability, concerns the imputation of responsibility within a “universalistic” morality. As society becomes more complex, the duties attached to norms can only be met by “cooperation and organization”. Habermas uses the example of an “unmistakable duty” to help feed those who are starving, specifically those who are strangers. As individuals we can donate to charities and give to foodbanks. Yet, more abstractly, millions watch while millions starve. Individual “initiative and range” of action cannot meet the demand for charitable aid. Aid such as “food, medicine, clothing” has to move through organized pathways. Even then, valid moral demands (e.g., universal) must be met within organizational frameworks which can be constraining and resistant to change. Law can address the problem of accountability by founding “organizations” and defining “jurisdictional powers”. Law establishes a formal system of accountable legal persons and legal subjects (e.g., corporations) (1996b:116-117).

Habermas also identifies a fourth problem which law addresses, “the limits of a postconventional morality”. Postconventional morality (e.g., a procedure for norming norms) involves a demanding form of discursive practice which problematizes traditional modes of legitimation and practices. However, morality does not, at least directly, provide prescriptions for replacing tradition. The system of positive law becomes a “reserve” “action system” capable of replacing traditional institutions which have lost their legitimation (1996b:117).

Within social modernization two forms of organizational need have unfolded. On one side, traditional action spheres of “family and school” have been “refashioned at their institutional base”. Still, their normative underpinning remains intact. On the other side, societal complexity creates new organizational needs which require the creation of “formally organized action systems”. Or, more generally, the “capitalist economy” and “bureaucratic agencies” only exist through the “legal medium” (1996b:117).

Habermas discusses yet another accomplishment of the legal code, one that points in an opposite direction. Morality’s internal links to the legal system allow it (morality) to circulate to all areas of a society which are subject to legal regulation. The circulation of morality to “all spheres of action” which are influenced by law includes even systemic, “media-steered interactions”. Functionally organized interaction tends to “unburden” social actors of “all moral expectations”, except for “a general obedience to law” (1996b:118). And, since law speaks the language of system, lifeworld retains a potential for influence over system through law, especially within radically democratic political formations. Thus, the moralization of society demands that the voice of reason speaks to issues at all relational levels (e.g., social and functional).

Within Habermas’ discourse theory of democracy, law becomes a medium of communication which can speak, through politics, “to all legitimately ordered spheres of action” (1998a:252). Law transfers the relations of reciprocity and symmetry, typical of communicative action and argumentation, “from the level of simple interactions to the abstract level of organized relationships” (1996b:437). In

order for morality to be effective “beyond the local level”, for all of society, it must be “translated” into a “legal code” (1996b:110): “law is the only medium in which it is possible reliably to establish morally obligated relationships of mutual respect even among strangers” (1996b:460).

In complex societies, the effectiveness of political decisions depends upon the regulative nature of positive law. Politics is functionally dependent upon the rule of law (1996b:214). When Habermas refers to law in its modern sense, he is talking about “enacted” or positive law which is legitimate – meaning it can be justified and binding – and enforceable – meaning it can be interpreted and applied (1996b:79). Law is also flexible, or open to change. A legal order, therefore, is an “artificial structure” which is characterized by five basic features: it is formal – what is not prohibited is permitted; it is individualistic – individuals, as legal subjects, are the “bearer of rights”; it is coercive – the state can enforce conformity; it is positive – law is enacted through political (legislative) decision making; it is procedurally enacted – a democratic process legitimates legislative outcomes (1996b:214-215; also 1998a:214-215). In varying degrees, all of these features are discussed here.

Modern law, for Habermas, refers to “modern enacted law”. Enacted law can make two claims: a claim to legitimacy, because of its mode of justification (e.g., democratic decision making); and a claim to binding power, through its “interpretation and enforcement” (e.g., courts). Law establishes a “higher level of legitimate orders” (e.g., parliamentary bodies, court system) which are anchored in the society component of the lifeworld. In contrast to morality, which is a form of knowledge, law can be understood as both a system of knowledge and a system of action. As a system of knowledge, law is a formal system of codes and interpretations. Therefore law, too, is cultural in nature. As a system of action, law is a “complex of normatively regulated action” which coalesces into dense networks of institutional orders (1996b:79-80). Because legal norms embody everyday “value orientations” and “motivations”, law, as an action system, has an “immediate effect” on action, unlike morality (1996b:79-80).

Just as the structures of the lifeworld (culture, society, personality) are reproduced through communicative action, the correlate “components” of the legal system (“shared legal traditions”, “institutions of law”, “individual competencies for interpreting and observing legal rules”) are reproduced through legal actions. And as is the case with lifeworld structures, the three components of the legal system share equally in producing legal action. Through the institutionalization of law, legal rules function to generate social integration. Since the legal code is produced through “ordinary language”, messages from lifeworld that are translated into a legal form become “comprehensible to the special codes of the power-steered administration and the money-steered economy”. Lifeworld can influence system, albeit indirectly. Habermas suggests that law, or rather the “language of law”, “functions as a transformer in the society-wide communication circulating between system and lifeworld” (1996b:81).

Furthermore, within modern economic and politically democratic societies, positive law is well suited to meet the need for social integration. On the one hand, law can address the functional demand for integration created by an economic system dependent upon “self-interested individuals” making “decentralized decisions” within “morally neutralized spheres of action”. On the other hand, law can also address the integration needs created by the demanding (e.g., time, energy) process of communicatively achieved agreement within everyday discursive practices. The normative expectation for social integration is shifted from individuals and their everyday communicative processes onto a legal order which establishes an egalitarian universalism for the legal subjects of that order. The legitimacy of the legal order (laws) is generated by institutionalized democratic procedures and communicative presuppositions (1996b:83, 414).

According to Habermas’ discourse theory of democracy, the legitimacy of moral and legal norms is assessed differently. On the one hand, the legitimacy of moral norms is evaluated in respect to the impartiality and universality of moral discourse. Moral norms must pass the universalization test (1998a:33). On the other hand, the legitimacy of legal norms is measured by a “more complex”

standard: “the rationality of the democratic procedure of political legislation” (e.g., voting procedures, fairness of compromise negotiation and formation) (1996b:232-233). Legally institutionalized procedures and ideal suppositions generate “rational outcomes” (e.g., legal norms) within legislative decision making. Legal norms “prove their rationality” when legal subjects are treated equally and are “protected in their integrity” (1996b:414).

Both morality and law function “to regulate interpersonal conflicts” and “to protect the autonomy of all”, equally (1996b:450). However, morality and law differ in terms of (a) individual autonomy, (b) the reference group and (c) the subject matter. (a) Unlike morality, positive law separates autonomy into a private and a public dimension. Within morality, autonomy is realized through moral self-determination. Norms are judged as just and binding when social actors use their own “impartial judgement”. Moral autonomy is “the capacity for rational self-binding” decisions. Legal autonomy is achieved through the (legal) self-determination of citizens. When legal autonomy is exercised, it assumes two forms: private autonomy, which involves “the private use of individual liberties”; and public autonomy, which comprises “the public use of communicative liberties” (1996b:450-451).

Within the moral domain, autonomy is undivided; within the legal domain, autonomy becomes differentiated into private and public forms. Reflecting the wholeness of moral autonomy, these two forms are co-original (1996b:104). They exist in “reciprocal relation”. In one summary explanation of this mutual dependency Habermas states: “legal persons can be autonomous only insofar as they can understand themselves, in the exercise of their civic rights, as authors of just those rights which they are supposed to obey as addressees” (1998a:257-258). Within the “motif of self-legislation”, the reciprocal relation between private and public autonomy reflects the fundamental idea that “the addressees of law are simultaneously the authors of their rights” (1996b:104).

Very importantly, these rights constitute the basis for legally institutionalizing discursive practices of opinion- and will-formation. And, it is through these

processes of discursive opinion- and will-formation that popular sovereignty (e.g., will of the people) becomes binding within a legal community (e.g., nation-state). By bringing reason, opinion and will together discursively, opinion- and will-formation has “legitimizing force”: “the legitimacy of law ultimately depends upon a communicative arrangement”. Thus, the internal connection between private and public autonomy is manifested within the “normative content” (e.g., rational argumentation) of the practice of political self-determination (“political autonomy”) (1996b:103, 104). Applied to the complexities of the welfare state, for example, Habermas’ “proceduralist model of justice” holds that,

private legal subjects cannot enjoy equal subjective freedom if they fail, in their political role as co-legislators, to make use of their communicative freedoms by participating in public debates about how needs are to be interpreted, so that citizens themselves can develop yardsticks and criteria according to which similar matters are treated similarly, and dissimilar matters dissimilarly. (1997:154-155)

(b) Where the reference group for morality is unlimited, for law it is localized. Morality is concerned with protecting “all natural persons” throughout all time and in every social space. The moral universe is boundless. Law, or a legal order, protects only legal subjects, as “bearers of individual rights”, within a “spatiotemporally localized legal community” (1996b:451-452). The legal domain is bounded. (c) Morality and law also have different extensions. Moral agreement is only possible regarding a narrow range of issues about which everyone could agree (1996b:451-452). Morality must pass the universalization test – a deliberative process in which normative validity is based on taking the perspective of the other in order to determine if everyone, from their own perspective, could agree to a norm (1998a:33). Legal regulation has both a narrower and a broader “extension” (scope). On the one hand, the application of law is narrower than morality because law can only regulate external (“coercible”) behavior. On the other hand, legal applications are broader in that law regulates both interpersonal conflicts as well as collective needs (e.g., policy, programs). As well, legal regulation pertains to the full range of politically relevant questions: moral, ethical, pragmatic and compromise (1996b:451-452).

Three principles explain the legitimacy of practical discourse as a procedural means of problem solving: the discourse principle ('D'), the universalization principle ('U') and the democracy principle. The first two principles ('D' and 'U') were outlined earlier. The principle of discourse – in which valid action norms require the rational agreement of everyone concerned – attempts to capture the nature of normative justification practices in general. When the discourse principle is applied to specific kinds of action norms, other principles devolve. In problematic cases where a norm of action regulates “simple interactions” and applies to “an indefinitely large circle of addressees”, moral discourse ('U') is appropriate. And, in situations where norms of action have a legal form, and different political issues arise, the democratic principle is applicable (1996b:158). Where the principle of universalization (“the moral principle”) regulates “informal and simple face-to-face interactions”, the principle of democracy regulates “relations among legal persons who understand themselves as bearers of rights”. Rational discourse “branches out” into “moral argumentation” (e.g., 'U') and “political and legal discourses” (e.g., democracy principle) (1996b:233). When the discourse principle takes a legal form, it becomes a principle of democracy (1996b:455).

The central task of the democracy principle is to “establish a procedure for legitimate lawmaking”. Habermas defines this principle as follows: “the democracy principle states that only those statutes may claim legitimacy that can meet with the assent ... of all citizens in a discursive process of legislation that in turn has been legally constituted”. The principle of democracy outlines a practice of self-determination in which participants voluntarily participate as “legal consociates” who reciprocally recognize each other as “free and equal members” of a legal community (1996b:110). Unlike a theory of argumentation, which can address the issue of discursively handling all political affairs, the democracy principle has a much narrower focus. It can tell us only how “rational political opinion- and will-formation” can be institutionalized: that is, “through a system of rights that secures for each person an equal participation in a process of legislation whose communicative presuppositions are guaranteed to begin with” (1996b:110)

Habermas specifies two fundamental differences between the principle of morality ('U') and the principle of democracy: their level of reference; and their point of reference. First, moral argumentation and political argumentation differ in terms of how they are constituted. Within moral discourse, arguments are "*internally* constituted". Within political discourse, "interpenetrating forms of argumentation are *externally* institutionalized" (1996b:110). Arguments are constituted within different reference levels. And second, where moral norms have a "simple" and "quasi-natural" character, legal norms have "an artificial" character. Legal norms are "intentionally produced" and "reflexive" (e.g., self-applicable) (1996b:110-111).

Sociologically speaking, institutionalization establishes a formal social space for "normatively expected behavior". Members of an institution know what is expected of them, when it is expected, and in which circumstances it is expected. Even procedures can be institutionalized (e.g., parliamentary decision making) (1996b:177). Legal institutionalization involves overlaying "a quasi-pure procedural justice" onto discursive practices which have an "imperfect procedural rationality". Institutionalization by no means freezes the logic of argumentation and its ideal presuppositions. Rather, argumentation is harnessed for making "reasonable decisions which have the force of law" (1996b:179). The advantage of institutionalizing discourse is that participants are relieved of "considerable motivational and cognitive burdens", burdens necessitated by the ideal presuppositions within "unregulated" forms of argumentation (1993:56-57).

Whereas, moral norms coordinate the interactions of all "speaking and acting" people "in general", and have universal validity, legal norms regulate a "network of interactions in a specific society". The legality of norms issues from legitimate legislative decisions within a state. Their applicability is delimited by the geographical boundaries of a sovereign state, and by the social – and legal – inclusivity of citizenship status. Legal norms have a "well-defined sphere of validity". Through the medium of law, political decisions become "collectively binding programs" – and society acts upon itself (1998a:217).

As well, political interests and goals are filtered through political decisions and into legal norms, and therefore crystalize within acceptable (e.g., legitimate) normative rules for behavior. A legal system or legal order therefore reflects both a particular form of life and basic universal rights (e.g., private autonomy to pursue personal interests, public autonomy to participate within the political process). Finally, “a broad spectrum of reasons” – moral, ethical, pragmatic, negotiation and compromise – provide a broad rational base for acceptable political decisions (1998a:217). However, legal norms retain their legal form no matter the reasons used to justify their legitimacy (1998a:191).

Habermas places critical attention upon the “public use of reason”. He points out that the politically necessary “orientation toward the common good” cannot be “legally compelled”:

Law can be preserved as legitimate only if enfranchised citizens switch from the role of private legal subjects and take the perspective of participants who are engaged in the process of reaching understanding about the rules for their life in common. ... constitutional democracy depends upon the motivations of a population accustomed to liberty, motivations that cannot be generated by administrative measures. This explains why, in the proceduralist paradigm of law, the structures of a vibrant civil society and an unsubverted political public sphere must bear a good portion of the normative expectations, especially the burden of a normatively expected democratic genesis of law. (1996b:461)

Public discourse plays a mediation role between “reason” and “will”. Decision making within democratic legislatures are majority decisions. If these political decisions are to be legitimate, then “majority rule” must be premised upon “the search for truth”. Consequently, public discourse must mediate between “the opinion formation of all and the majoritarian will-formation of the representatives” (1996b:475).

3.3.2.4 RELATIONAL STRUCTURES

Morality is a protective mechanism for human vulnerability. The ideal “communicative presuppositions” of argumentation establish relational structures within which participants understand themselves and others to be autonomous

agents – who can reach understanding based on good reasons (e.g., take yes or no positions), and to be members of a community – who are responsible for one another (1993:48). Impartiality requires egalitarian inclusivity as well as equal respect. According to Habermas, “Equal treatment means equal treatment of unequals who are nonetheless aware of their interdependence” (1998a:40). Moral universalism must account for both the equality of all persons and the difference between each person, or each person’s individuality. The other’s otherness must be neither levelled nor appropriated (1998a:40). On the one hand, *others* (e.g., strangers) must be included (e.g., solidarity). On the other hand, their *otherness* must be respected (e.g., justice). Well ordered relational structures are premised on the coeval nature of and interconnection between justice and solidarity.

3.3.2.5 JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY

What is fundamentally important for Habermas is that discourse ethics privileges neither justice nor solidarity. They are coequal, or opposite sides of the same coin (1993:154). Justice, or “what is equally good for all” (1998a:29), flows out of the binary nature of validity claims and the exacting conditions for argumentation. With their yes/no responses to the reason(s) proffered in support of a moral validity claim, everybody – as equals in their individual contribution(s) – can “influence the outcome” (1993:154). Solidarity, the “social bond” between members of a community (1998a:10), a community in which “each person regards every other person as ‘one of us’”, is based on the interchangeability of membership: “one person stands in for the other” (1998a:29). Participants understand themselves differently in each instance. In respect to justice, participants employ an “individualistic understanding of equality”. In terms of solidarity, they understand themselves as having “membership in an unlimited communication community” (1993:154). Thus, moral problem solving requires both justice and solidarity.

Problem solving moral discourse concerning the normative regulation of everyday life aims at rational agreement. Consensus concerning normative validity claims, “*like* truth claims”, must be backed by reasons. And, only good reasons can

persuade or convince. In other words, reasons have cognitive content. Valid moral norms must be able to “win the assent”, within practical discourse, of everyone affected (1993:50). Norms must be (impartially) justified (e.g., with good reasons) within “real discourse” (1990:68). Only real discourse, leads to justification and impartiality. The normative implications for achieving social order and for resolving conflicts through rational agreement are significant: cooperation and consensus rather than influence, coercion and violence; the public filtration and consideration of all relevant information and potential consequences; the patterning of rationally motivated actions; outcomes which are reasonable and fair; and an openness to moral learning, and therefore to social change. However, it is one thing to achieve rational agreement about a norm (e.g., justification). It is quite another to determine which norm is most appropriate *in actu*, in real life settings (e.g., application). The impartial application of a norm requires principles of practical reason, such as “all relevant aspects of a case must be considered” (1990:207). As in the justification of norms, their application calls for a moral point of view.

3.3.2.6 JUSTIFICATION AND APPLICATION

As has been stressed, moral practical solutions to modern problems of social order must be impartial. And, impartiality is engendered by the ideal presuppositions of argumentation, which all participants must accept if they wish to settle a normative dispute consensually. These presuppositions provide the normative framework for addressing not only problems of justification but of application as well. While the standard for assessing justification discourses is the “principle of universalization”, for application discourses the standard is the “principle of appropriateness”. Together these principles exhaust Habermas’ discourse ethic understanding of impartiality (1993:37).

Justification discourses establish a norm’s “worthiness of recognition” for “anticipated typical situations”, and not whether it is appropriate in all (even future) circumstances. Justification relates only to *prima facie* validity. When there is a question about which *prima facie* valid norm is “most appropriate” within a specific situation, the principle of appropriateness requires an exhaustive discussion of “all”

the “relevant features” (1993:37-38). Furthermore, all futures hold the possibility of “existential provinciality”. New “circumstances”, new “innovations”, new information and new ways of understanding may result in an accepted norm being contested (2003d:259; also 245ff, 272). Impartiality requires that discourses of justification be complemented by those of application.

Two further considerations follow from our discussion of practical discourse as an impartial procedure for moral problem solving. On the one hand, “rival traditions” can no longer claim to provide “prima facie general validity” to moral claims. Convincing reasons must appeal to something other than “the authority of unquestioned tradition” (1993:151) or conceptions of my or our good life. The normative content of argumentation’s “implicit assumptions”, Habermas stresses, allows participants to reach beyond “all particular forms of life”. Within argumentation, and therefore within practical discourse, this normative content (e.g., inclusivity, openness to contributions, absence of coercion) becomes “*generalized, abstracted and freed from all limits*”. The community of participants becomes “extended” to include everyone concerned. It becomes, at least “in principle”, a truly inclusive community (1998a:41; also 1993:50).

On the other hand, if reaching understanding (e.g., weak communicative action) and agreement (e.g., strong communicative action) is to follow from discourse, and if moral learning processes are to bridge temporal and social distance, then the ideal presuppositions of argumentation must be “sufficiently fulfilled”. Convincing others in argumentation requires that these suppositions be a “common point of departure” (1993:145). As Habermas explains, “The gentle force of unavoidable presuppositions of argumentation requires participants to take on the perspectives and to consider the interests of all others”. Moral learning therefore requires egalitarian universalism: the “mutual inclusion” (e.g., solidarity) of everyone; and the “equal consideration” (e.g., justice) of all interests (2003d:266).

3.3.2.7 MORAL LEARNING

Moral learning’s dependence upon relations of symmetry and relations of reciprocity, means that solidarity, justice and existent social conditions can be used

to assess it (2003d:248, 257). The nature and relevance of social conditions are addressed only indirectly. Egalitarian universalism is a “kind of reflection” of a “moral universe”: “a world of well-ordered interpersonal relationships”. The ideal presuppositions of argumentation direct participants in moral discourse towards this moral universe (2003d:266). For example, the “game of argumentation” allows participants to transcend the socio-historical boundaries created by their strong ties to a “concrete community” (2003d:266). Nevertheless, while “an inclusive community of well-ordered interpersonal relations” is a “reference point” (e.g., sociologically), within (moral) argumentation it is beyond participants’ “disposal”. What is available is a “‘worldless’ realm of discourse” (2003d:271).

Habermas claims that his discourse ethics is compatible with a “constructivist” understanding of (moral) learning. Firstly, argumentation is a “reflective form” of communicative action which requires a change in attitude, a “hypothetical attitude”. With a hypothetical attitude, social actors can shift from (communicative) action to discourse (1990:125). The “quasi-natural validity” of everyday certainties thereby loses its unquestioned authenticity. The naivety of what was taken for granted dissolves. Children, for instance, acquire this ability only through everyday “communicative practice”. They do not “start” with this competence (1990:126).

Habermas explains that,

In argumentation, claims to validity that heretofore served actors as unquestioned points of orientation in their everyday communication are thematized and made problematic. When this happens, the participants in argumentation adopt a hypothetical attitude to controversial validity claims. The validity of a contested norm is put in abeyance when practical discourse begins. The issue is then whether or not the norm deserves to be recognized, and that issue will be decided by a contest between proponents and opponents of the norm. (1990:125)

He goes on to say that a hypothetical attitude is necessary for discursively resolving both “issues of justice” as well as “issues of truth”. Facts become ““states of affairs”” which “may or may not be the case” within an objective world. Within a social world of “legitimately regulated interpersonal relations”, social norms become “possibilities

for regulation” which can be “valid” or “invalid” (1990:126). Even if an individual wanted to return to a state in which facts and norms are given or assigned, she would have to rely on a procedure of rational choice for choosing principles which would order her life-experience (1990:126).

Secondly, the hypothetical attitude within discourse leads to the theorization of states of affairs, the moralization of legitimate “institutionally ordered relations”, and the aestheticization of everyday lived experience. Theorization has been discussed above. Regarding moralization, an “unrelenting moralizing gaze” points to the interconnection between ethical and moral life (1990:107ff) and to social change. In respect to the latter, aestheticization, individuals are “freed” from the “routines of *everyday perception*” and from the “routines of everyday action” (1990:107). (Aestheticization involves the authentic experience of a “decentered, unbound subjectivity”; 1998c:412)

Thirdly, in one discussion, Habermas notes that the inclusive, “moralizing gaze” within practical discourse opens the “fusion of validity and social acceptance” of lifeworld certitudes to a critical discursive analysis. It opens contested lifeworld horizons to critical discussion and to re-closure – not foreclosure – around new agreements. The moral gaze transforms “[f]amiliar institutions” into “many instances of problematic justice”. According to Habermas, the moral point of view differentiates between “*moral questions* and *evaluative questions*”. Moral questions are concerned with issues which “can in principle be decided rationally” (e.g., justice, generalizable interests). Evaluative questions bear on issues “of the good life”, either for our community or for us individually. Significantly, the rational discussion of evaluative questions can take shape “only within the unproblematic horizon of a concrete historical form of life or the conduct of an individual life” (1990:108). As such, they are not amenable to a moral debate.

The abstractive shift demanded by the moral perspective requires inclusive and impartial practical judgements. Habermas identifies two implications of moral argumentation: an increase in rationality (e.g., rational discursive practices, ideal presuppositions); and the interconnection between ethical and moral life. The

former has been addressed previously. However some comments on the latter are necessary. Issues about how 'I' or 'we' should live 'my' or 'our' lives retain strong ties to "unquestioningly accepted ideas of the good life". They are firmly bound to "ethical life and its institutions". Compared to the universalizing "abstractive achievements" of moral discourse, rational discussion at the ethical level is limited. Habermas notes that, "Under these [ethical] conditions, problematization can never be so profound as to risk all the assets of the existing ethical substance" (1990:108-109). Moral argumentation does just that. Moral judgement does not rely upon the naive certainties of lifeworld contexts; it depends only on "rationally motivating insight". Moral action, however, requires rational capacities and appropriate motivations. These normative resources must come from rationalized forms of life (1990:109).

3.3.2.8 COMMENTS

The impartialness of the communicative practices within any community, universal or otherwise, is a reflection of its civilized nature. Modern, pluralistic societies demand impartial and universal normative standards for establishing and maintaining social order. The moral order – a well ordered form of life – reflected within the conditions necessary for moral argumentation have their limitations within real discursive practices. Law compensates for these limitations. The fundamental importance of the internal relation between justice and solidarity within everyday communicative practice is manifested also within the internal dynamic between private autonomy and public autonomy within the legal order. In either case, the legitimacy of well-ordered relational structures (e.g, societal, global) depends upon egalitarian universalism – relations of symmetry (e.g., justice) and relations of reciprocity (e.g., solidarity). Without egalitarian universalism moral learning cannot proceed. And, without the rational presuppositions of an impartial procedure for problem solving, the moralization of social order either will remain entrenched within ethical-political discourse or will be strategically consumed by fundamentalism or ideological extremism.

Habermas' discourse theory shows that while law is "nourished" by both "enfranchised citizens" and "a liberal political culture", these resources must meet law "halfway" (1996b:461). Rationalized opinion- and will-formation requires the resources of a rationalized lifeworld (1998a:252). As well, discourse theory highlights, quite starkly, the communicative flows between "culturally mobilized publics" (opinion-formation) and "legally institutionalized will-formation" (1998a:252). With his focus on communicative power, Habermas' theory draws out the discursive interconnections between law and politics, on one side, and lifeworld, on the other. Discourse, solidarity and communicative power are central themes within Habermas' understanding of the need for re-balancing the available resources within the lifeworld-system interchange.

3.3.3 EMBEDDEDNESS

3.3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Morality, Habermas claims, is embedded within ethical life (1990:99). The moral point of view situates participants within an intersubjectively shared social world; and it establishes the potential for participants to become distanced from it (1998a:7). Habermas explains that, "the moral point of view can only be realized under conditions of communication that ensure that everyone tests the acceptability of a norm, implemented in a general practice, also from the perspective of his own understanding of himself and the world" (1998a:33). Although morality's embeddedness within an ethical form of life places limitations upon his discourse ethics, Habermas feels these limitations do not devalue its purpose – achieving impartial and legitimate agreements which are in everyone's interest. In order to reach agreement, participants must sufficiently fulfill the necessary ideal conditions for argumentation.

On the one hand, the moral point of view enables participants in argumentation to make the abstractions (e.g., decontextualization, demotivation) necessary for moral judgements to be impartial and universalistic. Participants who reach normative agreement within moral discourse must be persuaded by good reasons alone. There is a very real sense in which moral life and ethical life

become separated within justification discourses. On the other hand, moral judgement cannot guarantee moral action will follow. The transition from judgement to action requires, in advance, the necessary disposition and motivations for putting any normative agreement into practice. As well, social conditions enabling participation must also be present. Thus, the gain in abstraction (e.g, universalization) must be compensated in order for morality to be practically effective. Morality must be grounded or embedded within lifeworld's ethical framework. It is in this regard that Habermas speaks of a rationalized lifeworld meeting morality halfway (1990:109; 2003b:4).

Habermas claims that the "division of labor" between morality and ethics has a "high price". Decontextualization and demotivation dissolves the connection between moral judgement and the motivations for taking the "right" action. All that is left, Habermas claims, is to "hope" that socialization and political processes and practices will provide the necessary resources for moral action. In order to bind the will, moral insight must be "embedded in an ethical self-understanding that joins the concern for one's own well-being with the interest in justice" (2003b:4). Moral action is therefore dependent upon both justice and solidarity.

One conceptual distinction Habermas uses to differentiate between moral and ethical contexts is a 'horizontal' and 'vertical' perspective (1998a:28). Within traditional societies these perspectives were conjoined; in modern pluralistic societies the normative regulation of everyday life requires their separation. A moral point of view requires participants in practical discourse to abstract themselves from the strong evaluations generated by attachments to friends, family, religious beliefs or ethnic heritage, as well as from a strategic orientation to personal success.

The horizontal perspective, through which social interactions are coordinated, refers to a moral dimension of justice and legitimate order. The vertical perspective, through which individual (my) or collective (our) life-projects are consciously constructed, appertains to an ethical dimension of the good life and to everyday lifeworld certainties. Moral judgements "abstract" beyond "context-bound" issues of "what is best for me or us" to address issues of "what is equally in the interest of

all". Only the moral perspective can determine what is just, in the sense of what is both impartial and good for everyone (1998a:28-29; and 1996b:95). Individuals who make moral judgements are embedded within everyday life-projects (e.g., family, work, religion) where ethical concerns tend to predominate. The relational dynamic of the moral-ethical interconnection is central to Habermas' communicative understanding of democratic citizenship within the nation-state.

The moral perspective is not isolated from the ethical perspective. Morality, Habermas states, is not "implemented"; it is learned. Each person learns it on her own, but only if she "grow[s] up under halfway healthy conditions". Even "the structures of simple communicative actions" embody a moral point of view. The moral viewpoint is manifested when we, as responsible social actors capable of speech and action, acknowledge others as "accountable", "vulnerable" and in need of "protection", simultaneously. Within modern constitutional states, law ("legality") becomes a "transmission belt" which "conveys these structures of mutual recognition ... to abstract relationships between strangers" (1997:73). In other words, even our most personal relationships – family – can reflect the moral point of view.

Pluralism, however, means that there are competing views (e.g., "different religious worldviews and sub-cultural life-orientations") about what the good life should be, about how we should develop our family projects, for instance. Only norms can establish a legitimate and just social order in which these different perspectives on the good life can "coexist with equal rights". Norms which pass the universalization test have the capacity to establish a "just way of living together", for everyone. They can provide a "guarantee" that everyone's integrity will be protected regardless of their life-setting (1997:84-85).

Furthermore, Habermas contends that the voice of reason is expressed similarly within different language communities. He states that basic concepts such as "truth, rationality, and justification play the same role in every language community, even if they are interpreted differently and applied in accordance with different criteria." Thus, morality, justice and solidarity – "universalistic concepts"

– are discursively anchored within divergent forms of life. The critical proviso, however, is that participants engage in “unrestricted dialogue”, thereby relativizing strong convictions associated with her or their life-projects (1998a:104-105). Legal norms and processes of institutionalization compensate for the inner (e.g., motivational deficits) and outer (e.g., time) barriers to unrestricted dialogue.

Habermas also argues that we are not “pure rational beings”. We are physical beings made of “flesh and blood” who think, feel and interact. In other words we are social beings who “encounter” each other in “social space and historical time”, in established concrete circumstances. And, as socialized (and individuated) persons, our communicative practices and agreements are dependent upon our motivations, competencies and circumstances. We must therefore find ways of living together which are agreeable to everyone within the “imperfect conditions” of real life. There is no guarantee that the ideal presuppositions of argumentation will be fulfilled or that agreements will be kept. The universal practice demanded of valid norms is therefore conditioned by socio-cultural resources (e.g., “cultural traditions”, “processes of socialization”, “habits”, “institutions”) which are capable of generating the appropriate competencies and motivations for moral-practical action (2003d:44-45).

3.3.3.2 THE COMMON CORE OF MORALITY

Habermas claims that morality is “tailored” to protect the unique vulnerabilities of speaking and acting human beings (1990:200, 201). Within our language dependent socio-cultural form of life (1993:108), our individual and collective identities are “interdependent”: “they form and maintain themselves together”. Each person becomes individuated through socialization. On one side, “consensus oriented language use” (e.g., communicative action and argumentation) requires competent social actors to become increasingly “individuated”, in order to intersubjectively coordinate a peaceful coexistence. On the other side, the social world is reproduced (“maintained”) through the same medium, “everyday language use” or communicative action (1990:200-201).

With lifeworld rationalization, the interconnection between individuation and socialization becomes more prominent. Social actors must now rely on their own “interpretive accomplishments” for creating, as needed, “new bonds and normative arrangements” (2001c:154). As they do, they become individuated. Individuation, however, has an intersubjective meaning. Because of the nature of communicative action and argumentation (e.g., necessary presuppositions, intersubjectivity and consensus) greater individuation brings greater dependence upon collective forms of life. Participants find themselves on their own and “embedded in a communication context”, at the same time (1990:202). How else can individual subjects meet even their basic needs or organize their life-projects but through their cooperative communicative actions?

The more individuated a person becomes, the more dependent she becomes upon the use of ordinary language for coordinating her everyday interactions with others. And, the more “entangled” she becomes within dense patterns of mutual recognition, the more vulnerable she becomes. Thus, the “inner center” of identity depends upon everyday linguistically mediated interactions. Habermas likens these everyday interactions to “a densely woven fabric” (1990:199, 200). Certainly, familial communicative practices are both dense and emotive.

Since identity develops through ongoing practices of subjective externalization within concrete contexts of language use, everyday linguistic entanglements reveal the “reciprocal exposedness and vulnerability” which is built into the fabric of our communicative practices (1990:199; also 2003b:34). Individual identity is inextricably intertwined with collective identity. In fact, Habermas refers to the vulnerability of identity as more important than physical threats to the body. Morality, he believes, can address the “constitutional insecurity and chronic fragility” of our communicative existence (1990:199) by protecting the interconnection between justice and solidarity.

Discourse ethics, which is concerned with the rules of procedure and with impartiality (e.g., pragmatic presuppositions of argumentation), makes the “hidden link” between justice and solidarity visible: “the equal rights of individuals and the

equal respect for the personal dignity of each depend upon a network of interpersonal relations and a system of mutual recognition" (1990:202-203). Even though the universal consensus necessary for normative agreement "transcends the limits of any community", the social bond remains "intact". Within argumentation each individual stands alone in her autonomy – in her "uninfringeable freedom" to accept or reject validity claims; and, she stands together with everyone else through her "embeddedness" in a common "web of [linguistic] relations" – through her "empathetic sensitivity" for others. Because of its universal presuppositions, moral argumentation becomes a "warrant of insightful will formation" (1990:201, 202). The inner connection between autonomy and embeddedness is central to moral discourse.

Furthermore, moral discourse points to three "fundamental ideas" or "structural aspects of the good life" which underlie morality: the "equal consideration" of all interests when "defining the general interest", the "degree of solidarity" and the "growth of welfare" (or "common good"). Habermas suggests that the last two are "indicators of the quality of communal life". They can be understood as relations of symmetry (e.g., solidarity). The first aspect, equal consideration, can be represented as relations of reciprocity (e.g., justice) (1990:201, 203). Without some functional semblance of these aspects of the good life (e.g. culturally, institutionally, motivationally), moral argumentation becomes fragile, even sterile.

Moral discourse provides a procedure for testing normative validity claims. Thus, it depends upon participants bringing "outside" content to the conversation. Discourse must be undertaken within a lifeworld horizon out of which normative problems arise. Concrete situations therefore carry empirical weight for resolving problems, for establishing social order. Moral discourse always has a "concrete point of departure", a contested norm. And, these normative disruptions provide the themes or topic which discourse takes up (1990:103).

Habermas refers to input-output problems which confront moral discourse. One problem, concerning the output side of moral discourse, involves "the disjunction between judgement and action". Justification does not guarantee that

moral insight will be actualized (1990:209). Moral action requires rational capacities and appropriate motivations which can bring moral insight into the realm of everyday practice. These resources must come from the form of life (e.g., lifeworld) in which participants are situated. Morality therefore is dependent upon the resources available within everyday life. In other words, lifeworld must meet morality “halfway”. Since the capacities and motivations for moral discourse must come from lifeworld experience, Habermas maintains “There has to be a modicum of congruence between morality and the practices of socialization and education” (1990:207 also 2003b:4). The reasons social actors use to support their stance in a moral argument also come from a lifeworld horizon.

The second problem has to do with the input side of moral discourse. Just as discourse cannot guarantee moral action, it also cannot guarantee the necessary conditions for everyone’s participation. Habermas highlights three general conditions which are not always present: an institutional infrastructure which cultivates rational decision making; socialization practices which could impart the appropriate motivations and competencies for rational action; and, the “material living conditions and social structures” which enable everyone to participate. When material conditions abrogate the necessary presuppositions of argumentation, “moral issues” can become “issues of political ethics” (1990:209). The focus should then turn to the transformation of a way of life.

3.3.3.3 MORAL LIFE AND ETHICAL LIFE

An “ethically neutral conception of justice” requires the moral perspective to take precedence over *my* or *our* understanding of the good life. For instance, “equal treatment” of different “individuals” and “groups”, and the “just regulation” of relations between “states”, “world citizens” or “cultures”, can be achieved only through a universalistic morality of “equal respect and solidaristic responsibility for everyone”. Questions concerning equal consideration of everyone’s interests (e.g., moral-practical questions) reach beyond *my* or *our* evaluations of what might be best for *my* or *our* lives (e.g., ethical-political questions). Where the former is more

abstract, the latter is context bound. Still, Habermas emphasizes the relational dynamic between the two (1998a:28, 29).

The moral perspective can be understood as an idealized “extension” of the ethical. There is, according to Habermas, a “remnant of the good at the core of the right” (1998a:28, 29). After all, our moral consciousness is based upon “a particular self-understanding”. We understand ourselves as members who “belong to the moral community”. In effect, the moral community extends to everyone who has been “socialized into any communicative form of life”. Since personal identities are stabilized “only” within “relations of reciprocal recognition”, the integrity of each identity requires “special protection”. Habermas declares that community members can find this protection by appealing to an “authority beyond their own community” – the inclusive, moral community: “Every concrete community depends upon the moral community as its ‘better self’” (1998a:29). Morality, therefore, is a “protective mechanism” for human vulnerability (1998a:30).

3.3.3.4. NORMS AND VALUES

Traditionally, social bonds were based on inherited values and norms and established communication and socialization practices. Lifeworld rationalization has shattered the traditional and ascriptive background consensus around which social order solidified. Social actors now shoulder the responsibility for establishing new normative arrangements through their own interpretive accomplishments (2001a:154). If social actors wish to coordinate their interactions and resolve problems peacefully and cooperatively, then the moral point of view is the only perspective through which a consensus can be achieved. Agreements cannot be foisted upon participants in moral discourse. In cases of interpersonal conflict, morality demands that the social world justify itself. Legitimately ordered interpersonal relations lose their quasi-facticity and become open to critique and debate. While norms are open to moral justification (e.g., universalization test), values, as a rule, are not (1990:177). Habermas makes a clear distinction between values and norms in terms of moral justification.

Cultural values are tied to particular forms of life, to specific collectivities. They cannot, strictly speaking, claim normative validity for everyone. In multicultural societies, the embeddedness of values in ethical forms of life limits the universality and unconditionality necessary for broad or inclusive normative agreement about them. Since values do not represent a “general interest”, Habermas suggests they can, “at best”, become absorbed within norms (1990:104). While they can be discussed, values nevertheless remain embedded within the everyday lifeworld and tied to strong convictions (e.g., religious beliefs).

Since every lifeworld is “saturated with ethical values”, our everyday communicative actions are embedded within an ethical form of life (1993:77). Within communicative action, the pragmatic presuppositions relate only to those directly involved in a lifeworld or “a particular collectivity”. However, within argumentation, and therefore within moral discourse, the presuppositions concerning “symmetry and reciprocity” must be extended universally, to include everyone (1988-89:47-48 f #20). Thus, the distinction between values and norms becomes critical.

Values and norms differ in four fundamental ways: (a) their orientation; (b) their coding; (c) their bindingness; and (d) their coherence (as a system). (a) First, values are teleological in nature (purposeful, consequential) while norms are deontological (rule following). Values are “intersubjectively shared preferences” which reference the “most desirable” conduct. They are realized through goal oriented behavior. Norms obligate everyone to fulfill “generalized behavioral expectations”. They ought to be satisfied. Value orientations are centered in specific, concrete forms of life (“collectivities”); a normative orientation is all inclusive. (b) Second, since values are preferential, indicating that specific goods – “what we strive for” and “what is good *for us*” – are “more attractive”, they can be hierarchically arranged or coded. Norms cannot be arranged in like fashion. While we can assent to values by degree, we either accept, reject or abstain from judgement regarding norms. The validity basis of norms is binary coded (1998a:55; and 1996b:255).

(c) Third, the bindingness of values has a “relative sense” since they involve estimations of “goods” (what we strive for) which are relevant (for me or us) for a particular culture or form of life. By contrast, the obligatory nature of binding norms has an “absolute sense”. They are “unconditional” and “universal” duties which are “equally good” for everyone. And (d) fourth, because values “compete for priority” within each problem situation, they are ordered within a “flexible configuration” characterized by tension. Valid norms must be non-contradictory for the same people. They form a “coherent complex” or a “system” (1998a:55; and 1996b:255).

Values and norms also differ in terms of their application. Quite simply, values recommend behavior while norms command action. The value configuration for a specific collectivity recommends behaviors which are good for us, “on the whole and in the long run”. The system of norms commands the “right action” which is “equally good *for all*”. Interestingly, this difference is blurred for legal norms (“principles of law”) because positive law applies only to the legal subjects of a territorial state (1996b:256). Compared to values, norms have stronger “justificatory force” due to their universal and unconditional nature. For norms, there are underlying rational standards; whereas for values, these universal standards do not prevail. The preferential nature of values means that they are, as “optimizing prescriptions”, ranked on the basis of “customary standards and hierarchies” (1996b:259, 260).

The discussion of norms and values thus far has centered upon justification discourses. Within these discourses, the validity dimension of rightness indicates a norm about which everyone agrees. Within discourses of application, the goal is to determine the “most suitable” or appropriate norm for a particular problem or situation. Suitability is determined on the basis of an exhaustive description of the “situational features” in terms of all “normatively relevant points of view”. Since the most appropriate norm is selected for each case, and inappropriate norms held in reserve, the coherence of the normative system is preserved. Competing values cannot be differentiated in the same way. Although valid norms can vary from case to case, and even change over time, the “coherence proviso” ensures a “unified

system” (1996b:260-261). Thus, because of the underlying rational standards, appropriateness and validity have the same essence.

Because we are embedded within a particular social world, we do not have “independence” from it. Values, therefore, cannot provide a “justification-transcendent point of reference” capable of “fulfilling validity conditions” for moral-practical issues. Unlike the objective world which confronts social actors as they address questions of truth, there is no objective universal standard for the binary coding (e.g., yes, no) of values (2003d:273). Values, Habermas contends, “have a certain objectivity” which is grounded in a concrete community or form of life. Value judgements are “indexed” to these communities. Thus, in the case of value judgements, the evaluative standards social actors employ within moral argumentation are drawn from their lifeworld settings (2003d:229). In contrast, when the rightness of a norm is at issue, social actors have only ‘reasons’ as a basis for coding. And since reasons are either better or worse, and never unconditionally right, practical discourse can only end in “more or less ‘good’” results, results which are fallible. The reference point for the rightness of moral judgements is universal “rational acceptability” (2003d:272-273).

3.3.3.5 PUBLIC SPHERE AND PRIVATE SPHERE

As citizens of a democratic nation-state, individuals are “bearers” of two “positions”. They are positionally centered within (a) the public sphere and within (b) a societal membership (1996b:366). (a) The first position, the public sphere, is a “*communication structure*” in which a “linguistically constituted” “*social space*” for communicative action and argumentation is always present. The communicative structure of the lifeworld consists of this public sphere and a private sphere (see Figure 3.1). Both are socially (versus functionally) integrated spheres of action. Where the former (public sphere) is specialized for cultural and social integration, the latter (private sphere) is centered in socialization (1987c:310, 318-319; 1984b:341).

Since it is constituted and reproduced through discursive practices, the public sphere is grounded by the rational preconditions of communicative action (and

argumentation). In principle, the social space is open to everyone, and everyone can contribute. Thus, spatial boundaries are not fixed. Communicative patterns can become more abstract (e.g., inclusive) and more permanent. The point is that these spaces resonate with the voices of individuals whose life-experiences have become problematic (1996b:360-361).

Habermas describes the communicative connection between public and private spheres as follows:

The communicative channels of the public sphere are linked to private spheres – to the thick networks of interaction found in families and circles of friends as well as to the looser contacts with neighbors, work colleagues, and so on – and indeed they are linked in such a way that the spatial structures of simple interactions are expanded and abstracted but not destroyed. Thus the orientation to reaching understanding that is predominant in everyday practice is also preserved for a communication among strangers that is conducted over great distances in public spheres whose branches are quite complex. (1996b:365-366)

The public and private spheres are separated by “different conditions for communication”, not by communicative content (e.g., “issues”) nor by “relationships” (1996b:366). The public sphere, as a public space, is communicatively constituted, not rule ordered (e.g., organizational membership).

Communicative impulses which enervate public discourse originate within the private experiences of public problems: “The public sphere draws its impulses from the private handling of social problems that resonate in life histories” (1996b:366). Indeed, family members can discuss moral-practical issues (e.g., terrorism) within the social space of intimate relationships, and then continue the discourse within more abstract public social spaces (e.g., media) . One is reminded of the *importance* of family within Habermas’ conceptualization of the early development of the public sphere (1991b:43ff).

(b) The second position, societal membership, involves formal (and informal) roles that come with everyday living in a nation-state. Habermas maintains that everyday lifeworld experience is an “appropriate antennae” for sensing systemic problems which require moral practical solutions. Individual life-histories become

focal points which bear the “burdens” of systemic deficiencies. These burdens, he argues, tend to “accumulate in the lifeworld” (1996b:365). From a theory of society perspective, lifeworld is of interest to Habermas because of its sensitivity or vulnerability to social crises. Habermas uses the lifeworld infrastructure (e.g., culture, society, personality) as a “yardstick” or a “sounding board” for social problems (1997:71).

Everyone occupies multiple and complementary roles within modern society: “employees and consumers, insured persons and patients, taxpayers and clients of bureaucracies”. These roles expose members of society to the limits of the “corresponding service systems” (1996b:365). One example would be the failure of social welfare programs to provide the required or appropriate services necessary to meet client needs. Issues such as these often become flashpoints for public opinion.

The different spheres of private life (e.g., family, friendships, neighborhood associations) “have an existential language at their disposal” which allows an individual to assess “socially generated problems” in her own life-experience. An issue or problem first becomes “interpreted within the horizon of a life history intermeshed with other life histories in the contexts of shared lifeworlds” (1996b:365). Interpretations at this level are tied to “strong evaluations” about an individual life-project or about a collective way of life: “How one understands oneself depends not only on how one describes oneself but also on the ideals toward which one strives”. Ethical self-understanding is evaluative (1993:4). It is not a value-neutral stance. Ethical discourses aim at providing advice about achieving a life-project or about personal behavior (1993:9).

Problems of action coordination are also pragmatic in nature. A pragmatic point of view focuses upon personal preferences and goals (1993:5). It is strategic in orientation. In order to realize these preferences and goals, a social actor exerts influence or coercion to coordinate actions. Success is attributable to her own actions (1998c:203, 204): “In strategic action, the participants assume that each [participant] decides egocentrically in accordance with [her] ... own interests”. At

this level, the resolution of action coordination conflicts can be “played out” or “curbed” – subject to negotiation and compromise. Pragmatic discourse aims at an achievable plan of action (1993:6,8).

Only with a “radical shift in perspective and attitude” can a pragmatic problem become a moral problem (1993:6). The shift from ethical to moral is less dramatic. Moral-practical problems relate to another relational dimension, quite apart from ethical and pragmatic concerns. Moral-practical problems occur when conflicts between social actors’ interests disrupt their “orderly coexistence”. The end point for moral practical discourse is a “just resolution” to a disagreement – a generalization of interests. The outcome is a normative agreement which is in everyone’s interest (1993:9). A more detailed account of the three types of discourse follows.

3.3.3.6 THREE TYPES OF DISCOURSE

Habermas has identified three fundamental types of discourse – pragmatic, ethical and moral. Each form of discourse involves a unique standpoint from which to approach social problems: expediency, goodness and justice, respectively (1996b:159). And, each form of discourse focuses upon specific issues: means and effects, self-understanding (I/We), and valid norms (Chambers 1996:187ff). He discusses these discourses under different orienting questions: in one case, ‘What should I do?’ (1993:8) and in the other case, “what ought we do?” (1996b:159). The latter is specialized for political discourse: collective problem solving and achieving collective goals. Habermas even differentiates ethical discourse into ethical-existential and ethical-political. With the shift from the former to the latter the focus of concern shifts from my life-project to our life-project, respectively (1996b:160).

Habermas points out that “pragmatic tasks” require a substantively “different kind of action” (1993:8). When dealing with pragmatic questions, participants’ attitudes are oriented toward consequences (success). Ethical and moral questions, by contrast, require a discursive orientation to problem solving. The difference between the three substantive questions is evident in the way they are answered. A pragmatic recommendation is addressed to the “*arbitrary choice*” of

social actors oriented by personal preferences and goals (e.g., values). Ethical (clinical) advice is directed to the “*resoluteness*” of someone who is “committed” to “an authentic life” (mine/ours). And, moral injunctions are applied to a “*free will*” which is directed by moral insight. Within moral decision making, the assumption is that “contingent dispositions” (e.g., pragmatic) and “life histories and personal identities” do not affect the free will (1993:9).

Within pragmatic discourse, reason and will are not internally related. Pragmatic discourse is oriented to the context, or to the “actual volitions of agents”. Within ethical-existential discourse, however, reason and will reciprocally “condition” each other so that “justifications become rational motives for changes in attitude”. Reflection on one’s life-history can only occur within a “shared form of life”. Furthermore, this shared life-form is shaped by those within it. Individual life-projects receive their orientation (e.g., shared value orientations) from that life-form. The universality of membership within an ethical-existential discourse extends only to the boundaries of that community. Given the level of commitment to fellow members within the community, the acceptance of any discursively derived clinical advice also signals a commitment to enact those recommendations (1993:1-12).

Ethical-political discourse is concerned with clarifying a shared form of life and the common values which shape it. The same basic questions and issues apply in ethical-political as in ethical-existential. However the singular is now plural (1996b:160ff). Within moral discourse the will and reason completely interpenetrate each other: “the autonomous will is completely internal to reason”. Ties to “established” ways of life are set aside (1993:13). Personal identity (e.g., egocentrism) and collective identity (e.g., ethnocentrism) are decentered. Rational decision making revolves around “what is equally good for all” (1996b:160ff).

Three comments are important here. First, the impartial and just resolution of action conflicts requires moral commands which “bind the will rationally from within” (1993:15). Rational, intersubjective agreement must supersede the subjectivity of individual participants (1993:12-13) and their strategic orientation to success (1993:15). Second, social complexity and the binary (e.g., yes/no) nature

of discursively achieving agreement creates a number of problems for moral argumentation: for example, how to pursue and implement collective goals; and how to regulate complex networks of interaction. Law as opposed to secular morality is better able to meet the demanding conditions for developing social order.

Finally, Habermas raises the question of whether or not practical reason can be understood in the singular (e.g., as a unity) when there are three forms of argumentation (pragmatic, ethical-existential/ethical-political, moral-practical), each with its own standpoint for dealing with social problems (the purposive, the good, the right – respectively). According to Habermas' discourse theory, the unity of reason is manifested within rational and institutional practices of opinion- and will-formation (1993:16-17). Institutionalization, it will be recalled, provides a procedural mechanism for reasonable (e.g., rational) outcomes with legal force. Institutionalization does not delimit the form or content of discourse (1996b:179).

Habermas conceptualizes the private and the public spheres in terms of "*different conditions of communication*". While communicative practices within private spheres are oriented toward my or our life-project, within public spheres they are oriented toward inclusivity and good reasons which are in everyone's interest. Discourse counts in both spheres, but differently. The two spheres are not sealed off from one another. Everyday needs, concerns and problems are channeled from the private sphere to a public sphere. The productive capacity of moral discourse (e.g., shaping opinions, making decisions) is dependent upon lifeworld centered impulses: "the public sphere draws its impulses from the private handling of social problems that resonate in life histories" (1996b:366).

Often it is "ethical-existential questions", not questions of universal justice, which hold the greatest concern for our everyday lives. Who we should marry, which career to pursue, which religious beliefs to accept, are all life forming questions which have tremendous immediacy and urgency for our day to day lives. These kinds of evaluative questions address problems that "force" individuals and groups "to clarify who they are and who they would like to be". Self-clarification questions, however, cannot meet the universalization test of moral discourse. There

are no solutions which could serve “the equal interest of all”. And so, the moral point of view, Habermas argues, very selectively focuses on “questions of justice”. Within moral discourse, only questions of justice can be settled by universal agreement, “by appeal to a generalizable interest” (1993:151).

However, justice, understood as “what is equally good for all”, must be accompanied by solidaristic responsibility for others, even for strangers who have different traditions and who live in different life-circumstances. Because socialization creates vulnerability, and because different cultures have different socialization practices, individuals must have access to an “authority beyond their own community”. Identity, whether individual or collective, can be stabilized only within relations of equal respect and mutual responsibility. The vulnerability stemming from the need for “reciprocal recognition” requires “special protection”. According to Habermas, morality is that protection (1998a:29).

3.3.3.7 OPINION- AND WILL-FORMATION

Habermas’ discourse theory of democracy proffers an ideal procedure for both “deliberation and decision making”. The procedure, also referred to as a procedure of deliberative politics, is the “central element” within democratic practices. The rational nature of the rules and forms of argumentation – borrowed from the normative content of communicative action – ensures that “reasonable or fair results” are produced within the legislative process (1996b:96). Discourse theory also provides a normative conceptualization of state and society, of the state-society relationship, and of the democratic process.

Society is decentered and stands apart from the state – and the economy. According to this view, popular sovereignty and politics are interconnected with “peripheral networks” of a public sphere. Influence flows from the periphery (e.g., lifeworld) to the center (e.g., democratic state). Deliberative politics depends upon two things: institutionalized procedures and communicative conditions; and the communicative “interplay” between “institutionalized deliberative processes” and informal public opinion. A “higher-level intersubjectivity of processes of reaching

understanding” is manifested within “democratic procedures” and within “communicative networks of public spheres” (1996b:298-299).

These public spheres provide social spaces for members of society to formalize their (political) concerns and channel them into political decision making bodies. The political issues which become topics of discussion have society-wide significance. Furthermore, civil society, which is differentiated from the economy and the state, is the “social basis” for public spheres. Finally, the communication flows between “public opinion-formation, institutionalized elections, and legislative decisions” guarantees that “influence and communicative power” become converted into “administrative power” through legislation (1996b:299, 301).

Habermas points out that “the normative implications are obvious”. The communicative practices within public spheres act as “a far-flung network of sensors” in response to society-wide problems (1996b:299, 300). Individuals bring their concerns and issues into public forums where they are debated, processed and refined into public opinion. When the influence of public opinion becomes channeled into procedural and rule governed decision making and legislative processes, influence is transformed into communicative power. Communicative power generates political power when public influence directly affects the decisions, and therefore the laws, made by the elected legislature (1996b:371-372). Since the political system is designed to act, communicative power “can only point the use of administrative power in specific directions”. Communicative power is not able to govern. Thus, within deliberative democracy, opinion- and will-formation can both monitor and (“more or less”) program political power (1996b:300).

Deliberative democracy’s normative expectations regarding the opinion forming public spheres and the decision making parliamentary complex are understandable. When social problems disrupt social integration, politics functions as a “safety mechanism”. In order to resolve social problems, politics, as one action system of many, must communicate with “all the other legitimately ordered spheres of action”. Under the watchful eye of public opinion, politics does so through positive law.

Also, Habermas points out that deliberative politics has an internal connection to the contexts (e.g., public sphere) of a rationalized lifeworld. Since lifeworld resources enable deliberative consensus, a rationalized lifeworld, he claims, must meet deliberative politics “halfway”. In one instance he identifies three enabling resources: “a liberal political culture”; “an enlightened political socialization”; and, most importantly, “the initiatives of opinion building associations” (1996b:302). New social movements might fit under the last resource. In another instance, Habermas explains that the autonomous public spaces in which opinion-formation develops must be embedded within “liberal patterns of political culture and socialization”. Once again, he indicates that informal public spheres and lifeworld resources must meet “halfway” (1996b:358).

And finally, in a third instance, Habermas speaks of how important it is for public spheres to be supported by an “egalitarian public of citizens” who have “equal rights of citizenship”. Cultural pluralism will only develop when “social stratification and exploitation” have been democratically addressed. Communicatively mastering societal conflicts produces a solidarity capable of uniting strangers who wish to cooperatively regulate their “common life” while remaining strangers (1996b:308). In terms of Habermas’ discourse theory of democracy, social action (e.g., communicative action) generates social order (e.g., legal order).

3.3.3.8 LIBERAL POLITICAL CULTURE

A liberal political culture accomplishes two general tasks, at once: First, it establishes a nurturing environment for “institutions of freedom” (e.g., public spheres); and second, it promotes democratic political education. For example, as people become more accustomed to using their communicative freedoms publicly, their attitudes and thinking change. The use of communicative freedoms generates possibilities for further enlightenment. Habermas also identifies a liberal political culture continuum between the “prudent pursuit” of self-interest, “custom” and “moral insight”. The communicative practices fostered by a liberal culture are able to interconnect “morality, law and politics”, thereby opening the political order to radical democratic processes. And, finally, a liberal political culture enables a

robust public sphere, a necessary condition for “political learning processes” (1998a:178).

Habermas describes the constitution as a “formal consensus” undertaken by citizens in order to regulate their interactions. The relationship between citizens is grounded in mutual recognition. “[E]ach person can expect to be respected by all as free and equal” (1996b:496). While the egalitarian relationships establishing citizenship are “legally guaranteed”, cooperation cannot be forced by legal norms: “modern coercive law does not extend to the motives and basic attitudes of its addressees”. No one can be required to make use of their democratic rights. Citizenship’s legal status must therefore be supported by motives and attitudes which are “oriented toward the common good”. The citizen role “must be embedded in the context of a liberal political culture” (1996b:498-499).

A democratic constitutional framework permits a diversity of cultural forms of life to co-exist, equally. While democratic self-determination permits the “right to preserve” a political culture, it does not allow a cultural form of life “the right to self-assertion”. Co-existence means that different cultural forms of life must share (“overlap”) a common and rationalized and open political culture. For Habermas, the openness of democratic citizenship to other ways of life embodies the requisite characteristics of a world citizenship. He concludes state and world citizenships frame a continuum which reflects the cosmopolitan path along which we are headed (1996b:514).

Habermas hopes that citizens within social-welfare democracies will “gradually develop into a liberal political culture”, become used to “institutions of freedom”, adopt “pacifistic mentalities” and demobilize the capacities for war (1994b:11). Furthermore, Habermas declares that emancipatory impulses are more likely to occur within social formations characterized by well developed “productive forces” and by “legal democracy”. Quite emphatically, he acknowledges that these conditions are more developed in the West (1994b:75). In part, this is why he suggests that the West has an opportunity to re-civilize the world, to help establish

social orders which engender and protect individual autonomy and mutual respect – egalitarian universalism.

When asked to identify some emancipatory tendencies within modern society, Habermas forwarded three: “individual freedom”, “social security” and “political participation”. These represent three measures of the respect for human life present within the “more fortunate parts of our planet”. However, he immediately qualifies his remarks by saying these emancipatory tendencies are accompanied by a darker side, readily visible in the Holocaust for instance. He goes on to say that four basic moral concepts must be open to change within shifting historical circumstances: “autonomy”, “human dignity”, “solidarity”, “equality” (1994b:106-107). Everyday life experience within rationalized forms of life should reflect them.

3.3.3.9 COMMENTS

Habermas understands posttraditional societies to have accumulated “a residual normative substance” derived from the normative content of actual argumentative practices. Within our communicative practices, across all forms of life (e.g., cultures), participants in communicative action (and argumentation) share certain necessary presuppositions (e.g., “openness, equal rights, truthfulness and absence of coercion”; 1993:32). Within our common “communicative forms of life”, our relationships are shaped by “relations of reciprocal recognition” (1998a:40). Within the procedural framework of our institutional structures, structures which warrant reasonable and enforceable outcomes, the rational nature of argumentative practice is preserved (1996b:179). For example, democratic procedure, and law, borrow their core structures from the normative content of argumentation (1996b:296-297). Even our “better political traditions” embody the traces of “an existing reason” (1997:77). Within our schools and families for example, socialization practices lead to the appropriate motivations and capacities for cooperatively resolving conflicts discursively (1990:207). Citizens expect to use their communicative freedoms.

But, for these communicative freedoms to be effective, they must be used. And, those who use them must have the unencumbered social space to engage in

public debate concerning lifeworld generated issues and concerns. The productive force of these communicative practices can develop the informal opinion- and will-formation necessary for influencing the formal parliamentary decision making and legislation. Communicative power's capacity to influence and push governments in certain policy and programming directions, means they can become more receptive to lifeworld needs. With the ability to shape decision making and laws, lifeworld can speak, albeit indirectly, to system in meaningful ways. Such is the goal of procedural democracy, and of radical democracy. If you are motivated, if you are accustomed to liberty (and expect it), and if you have associational ties which are based on egalitarian universalism, then rationalized lifeworld resources can enable lifeworld communicative practices to meet deliberative politics halfway.

3.3.4 OPENNESS

3.3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Our everyday communicative practices have a built-in openness to new experiences, new acquaintances and dependencies and new ways of thinking. In other words, we cannot not learn (1979a:147). Because of the communicative basis of our shared life-forms, and because of lifeworld rationalization, a wide range of communicative potentials have opened for self-directed life-projects and self-determined social formations. Habermas' discourse theory is sensitive to this learning potential, especially as it concerns social order. Societal learning depends upon two conditions: recalcitrant system problems, and latently available rationalized lifeworld structures. As to the former, crises abound. We need look no further than our daily newspaper or daily television news broadcast. In regards to the latter, our lives feed off these resources, in all our communicative actions. Three examples are: a cultural awareness and appreciation of basic communicative liberties; "freely associating members" (1996a:8); and liberalized child-rearing practices.

Habermas' discourse theory attempts to identify opportunities for rationalized modes of action for dealing with system oriented problems (1979a:121-122). His discourse theoretical model of democracy emphasizes the importance of

communicative conditions within the political process which can produce “rational results”. Rational results requires that all levels of the political system operate deliberatively (1998a:245-246). Discourse theory places great normative demands upon communicative processes of “higher-level intersubjectivity”: formal parliamentary deliberations and debate, and informal communications networks within the political public sphere. Within these formal and informal public spaces, rational opinion- and will-formation about society-wide problems coalesce. As informal opinions become embedded within the formal parliamentary process (e.g., elections, legislation), “communicatively generated power is transformed into administratively utilizable power” (1998a:248-249). When public influence is brought to bear on decision making parliamentary bodies and legislation results (e.g., law), communicative power has been exerted. Communicative power is law making (1996b:150).

On this model of democracy, civil society becomes the base within which autonomous political public spheres develop. According to Habermas, understanding democracy in this fashion places the public, or all members of society, in a position to have a voice in determining their form of life. Understood in these terms, democracy calls for a “normative demand” for rebalancing the three resources – solidarity, money, power – available for integrating and regulating contemporary societies. The “normative implications” are enormous:

the socially integrating force of solidarity, which can no longer be drawn solely from sources of communicative action, must develop through widely diversified and more or less autonomous public spheres, as well as through procedures of democratic opinion-and will-formation institutionalized within a constitutional framework. In addition, it should be able to hold its own against the two other mechanisms of social integration, money and administrative power. (1996b:299)

Since politics is only one action system of many, and since it functions to maintain societal integration, it has to communicate with the other legitimate systems through law (1998a:252). Thus, lifeworld needs and concerns become filtered through public spheres of communication where they become opinions

which can influence political decision making. If the goal is to foster an emancipated form of life, then administrative power – “deployed for purposes of social planning and supervision” – is not a good medium to achieve it. Democratization processes, yes. Intervention, no (1996b:372).

3.3.4.2 MORAL LEARNING PROCESSES

All social orders are structured by their problemsolving capacities. According to Habermas, practical (moral) problemsolving will be more or less successful to the extent that actual (deliberative) discursive practices can achieve their rational potential (e.g., reach agreement). Learning processes are enabled by the world disclosing ability of language and by the rational accomplishments (e.g., normative agreements) of actors engaged in argumentation (1998a:337). In turn, moral learning fosters social change and establishes social order. Changing historical circumstances and social needs necessitate adaptive capacities. Habermas describes moral learning processes as “an intelligent expansion and reciprocal interpenetration of social worlds that in a given case of conflict do not yet sufficiently overlap” (2003d:105).

Since language is the universal medium in which validity claims are proffered, contested and resolved, linguistic world disclosure and learning processes interact, in a dialectical (2003d:80) or “circular process” (1998c:336), within the everyday practices of reaching understanding. Conceptually, the process resembles a recursive pattern: language – world disclosure – learning process – language Moral learning occurs when social actors’ “dissonant value orientations” collide (2003d:265, also 256) and they attempt to arrive at a discursive consensus. Participants learn as they include each other in the world they are linguistically constructing through their everyday communicative practices. By reaching consensus or agreement, participants’ lifeworld borders “overlap” and “entwine”. Within moral argumentation, knowledge of the world (e.g., meanings, expectations, competencies) is relativized, expanded and interpretively revised (1998c:244, 335-337). These interpretive accomplishments are reabsorbed within the lifeworld background for use within future discursive engagements. The recursive learning

process within lifeworld's communicative structuring demonstrates the emancipatory potential within everyday talk.

Societies learn derivatively through individuals' learning capacities. Because of the "social boundary conditions" (e.g., values, norms, institutional complexes, political and legal formations, individual life-histories) within which social interaction occurs, societal and individual learning are interconnected in a circular fashion. There are two basic conditions affecting societal learning capacities: the presence of systemic problems (e.g., inflation); and latent, cultural resources available through lifeworld rationalization (e.g., egalitarian relationships, cultural reflexivity) (1979a:121-122). What is of most concern in this research is the normative implications of the last condition, rationalized lifeworld resources, in relation to establishing a better way of life. The next chapter extends the analysis directly into the private sphere and family.

A central concern for Habermas, is that rational deliberative modes of action (e.g., political public sphere) are needed in order to moralize problems of social order. Moral learning processes, which are grounded within the rationality potential of argumentation, address this concern. Normative dissonance "can be overcome by moral learning processes that lead the disputing parties to broaden their respective social worlds and to *include* one another in a world they jointly construct in such a way that they can assess their conflicts in the light of shared standards of evaluation and resolve them consensually" (2003d:256). Certainly this seems simple enough – normative dissonance can be overcome by normative consensus. The problem, for Habermas, is how best to actualize the emancipatory potential which inheres a deliberative moral learning process within modern complex and pluralistic societies, or within a cosmopolitan global order.

3.3.4.3 MORAL ORDER AND LEGAL ORDER

3.3.4.3.1 Introduction Moral learning occurs through everyday discursive practices which are embedded within lifeworld practices. Embeddedness is a functional necessity since discourse is oriented to reestablishing background understandings which have been called into question: "the function of

argumentation is to dispose of failing practices and unsettled practical uncertainties” (2003d:40). However, moral learning is a fallible, open discursive process within which knowledge is relative to the problem solving practices current at that time (2003d:41).

Individuals encounter each other within concrete forms of life which have been molded within “social space and historical time”. Coordinating their interactions requires both reaching understanding regarding the adoption and application of appropriate moral obligations and compliance with these agreements within subsequent actions. Social actors are composed of flesh and blood, and have been socialized into particular ways of understanding the world and of acting within everyday life. Everyday life-conditions are “imperfect”. And so, two issues become apparent: the actualization of the demanding presuppositions of argumentation (“rational discourse”); and universal compliance with legitimate normative standards (2003d:45).

Habermas explains these issues in terms of accessibility and reasonableness, respectively. Firstly, in modern societies such as ours, difficulties surrounding accessibility to rational discursive practices of moral clarification and deliberation of problems persist. Real discourses are ‘islands in the sea of practice’. The complexities of social life often generate “unusual issues” and “unsurveyable situations” which must be normatively regulated (e.g., bioethics). Furthermore, “recalcitrant” problems surrounding the application of normative standards (e.g., laws) may require continued rational discussion. Accessibility to practical discourses for resolving problems noncoercively or nonviolently can be impeded by circumstantial difficulties, motivational deficits and inadequate competencies (2003d:44-45). Deficits in social welfare conditions also can intensify problems.

Secondly, problems arise regarding the reasonableness of normative standards. Once a normative agreement is established, will *all* participants comply? Here, the issue involves actoral motivations. Can the “mores” of a community – the “traditions”, “habits and institutions”, “processes of socialization” – engender appropriate motivations for rational action? In complex and multi-cultural societies,

only very general norms could expect universal acceptance and compliance. Non-compliance means that a requisite condition (e.g., universal practice) for accepting a norm as “morally binding” has not been met (2003d:44-45).

In the face of difficulties such as these, Habermas states that morality needs to be complemented by law, or more specifically the “force of the rule of law”. He argues that the “legal-political framework” of the modern democratic state can be understood as the “core of a rational morality”. This core, however, must be institutionalized. It must be centered in the society component of everyday life. And, it must produce reasonable outcomes. Positive law is the “medium” through which the core features of morality can be institutionalized. Democratically legislated law provides a “bridge” between “norm and reality”. Morality cannot do this. The constitutional state, with its “monopoly on violence” (e.g., sanctions against noncompliance), can effectively coordinate interactions normatively (2003d:44-45), with the expectation of both participation and compliance. Democratically produced norms can be legally enforced.

Democratic constitutional states provide a procedural basis for egalitarian universalism – everyone is included, everyone can contribute, and everyone desires a non-violent consensus based on good reasons (2003d:106-107, 265). Egalitarian universalism highlights the importance of the dialectic between “equality in both law and fact”. Habermas explains this dialectic in terms of the “principle of exhaustion” (2003d:48), a principle which emphasizes the constitution as an ongoing “project” (2003d:209). Formally distributed private and public rights do not “guarantee” that everyone will actually exercise these rights. Material equality also requires an “equal opportunity” to exercise them. The creation of the welfare state, for example, was, in part, a response to material inequalities.

Over time and independent of individual citizens, the nature of these contexts and the distribution of life-opportunities changes. In other words, societies undergo structural changes which tend to affect everyday life-conditions. The industrial revolution is one significant example. As well, smaller incremental changes are always in motion. Thus, the balance between equality in law and fact also shifts.

The injunction underlying the *principle of exhaustion* implores citizens to “keep exhausting the normative content of its [constitutional] principles” as historical conditions change (2003d:48). This is possible, Habermas contends, only through the institutionalization of radical democracy, accompanied, of course, by a rationalized lifeworld which meets it halfway.

3.3.4.3.2 Moral Order The most “fundamental” issue morality addresses, according to Habermas, is the problem of legitimately regulating interpersonal relationships in complex, pluralistic societies. Of course, the “prevailing” understanding of justice provides the perspective from which members of a community or society will decide which actions are “equally good” and “binding” for all members. The universalization test (1998a:33) provides a rational, abstractive standard (e.g., impartiality, universality) for determining the legitimacy of moral norms. When normative disputes arise, they can be settled through a discursive appeal to reasons which convince everyone, impartially. However, legitimacy varies according to the “multiplicity of substantive representations of justice” (2003d:262).

The expectation of “egalitarian” and “universalistic” practices, and therefore of an increasingly abstract understanding of justice, was necessitated by increasing social complexity. The current standard for justice is determined by the necessary conditions for “impartial judgement formation”. Impartiality allows for the differentiation of the *justification* of norms and the *application* of norms. The abstractive nature of impartiality means that even norms which are being applied may need justification. Third party objectivity (e.g., judge applying norms) does not fit under the legitimating canopy of impartiality. Everyone must take part, equally. Justice is a “procedural” concept: “The expectation of legitimacy – that only norms that are ‘equally good for everyone merit recognition – can be fulfilled only by means of a procedure that insures the inclusion of everyone who is potentially affected as well as impartiality in the sense of equal consideration of all interests involved” (2003d:264-265).

Habermas is positing a communicative model of deliberation for moral problemsolving. He points out that the ideal presuppositions of rational discourse

can address the requirements of an impartial procedure. Second, the essential purpose of moral knowledge is “critique and justification”. Within rational discourse, moral knowledge becomes “a stockpile of convincing reasons” which participants use to resolve conflicts consensually (2003d:265-266).

Several summary comments relating to the moral order as a world of well-ordered relationships follow. First, fallibility is built into the structure of moral judgements. For example, validity statements can be supported only with real discursive practices, and only using “available reasons” derived from the lifeworld resources (2003d:247). Second, the well-ordered relationships of a moral order are constructed. Participants, through their yes/no decisions, help fulfill the validity conditions for discursively achieved moral judgements (2003d:248). With each discursive project, the recursive learning process (language – world disclosure – learning – language ...) results in lifeworld opening, closing and reopening anew.

Third, a norm’s claim to universal validity is judged by the existing “social conditions” and by the “relations of reciprocal recognition”. While the reasons we proffer in discourse are within our purview (e.g., selection, refinement, revision), these conditions and relations are not (2003d:248). Fourth, Habermas asserts that the meaning of *rightness* is “exhausted” by “ideal warranted acceptability”. *Truth*, by contrast, is referenced to “truth conditions” which must be “met by reality itself” (2003:248 TJ). Fifth, moral discourse relates to the social world as a “regulative idea”: “the mutual inclusion of the other in an inclusive – and to that extent universal – world of well-ordered interpersonal relationships” (2003d:248). Moral discourse regulates the inclusive-solidaric nature of the relationships.

Sixth, the well-ordered relationships of a moral community are challenged by two sorts of fallibility: (a) mistakes and (b) application. (a) Mistakes concerning the ideal presuppositions can occur. One or more may turn out not to be sufficiently fulfilled. (b) All valid (justified) norms must be supported by discourses of application. It is possible that normative justifications may be reopened retroactively when new information comes to light (2003d:259).

Seventh, the moral order is fundamentally an open order. In as much as the idealizing conditions of discourse are sufficiently met, the moral (“justificatory”) community is decentered, and inclusive. Decentering follows justificatory practices. It creates moments of inclusivity within moral discourse (2003d:258). Within modern pluralistic societies, and within our globalized life-experience, the inclusion of the other in moral argumentation is a demanding but necessary supposition for establishing a just social order. Eighth, the validity of moral judgements and of moral learning is assessed by the inclusivity standard (2003d:256, 260). The more decentered participants’ perspectives become, the more inclusive the practice becomes. The more inclusive the practice becomes, the more well-ordered the social universe becomes, so the argument goes. In spite of the linearity of the argument, only discourse will determine the empirical nature of social order.

Ninth, the “fully inclusive” moral world of well-ordered relationships is “mandated” as opposed to “given”. The mandate comes from the procedural form of “rational discourses in general” through which consensus is achieved and norms validated (2003d:260-261). Tenth, the image of the moral universe suggested by a discursive procedure for problemsolving is that of “a thoroughly morally ordered community”. The counterfactual implication for everyday social life is “a completely inclusive world of well-ordered interpersonal relationships” where we are all “brothers and sisters”. As wonderful as the global family metaphor might appear to some, Habermas points out that it is only a hypothetical construct (2003d:104-105). The moral world cannot be “assimilated” to the objective world (2003d:266). Real life conditions must flow out of real life discursive practices. They cannot be cast in advance. Eleventh, the projection of a moral universe from discourse is limited by its normative content. For instance, the validity of moral imperatives is secured by its (deliberative) justification. There is no need for an external world beyond this horizon. All that is necessary for moral agreement is the “‘worldless’ realm of discourse”. Once discourse opens, the world of well-ordered relationships is unavailable (2003d:271).

3.3.4.3.3 Legal Order Law and morality are both concerned with problems of social order. They both satisfy social integration needs. Two central issues they address are the legitimate ordering of interpersonal relations and the peaceful and consensual resolution of conflict (1996b:106). Law, as well as politics, acts both as a “transformer” and as a “safety net”. As a transformer, legal rules communicate to all spheres of society (e.g., lifeworld and system). Law makes the “society-wide” circulation of communication “comprehensible” through the legal code (1996b:81). As a safety net, law establishes relations of mutual respect between its addressees, including strangers, at the abstract level of “anonymous, systemically mediated interactions” (1996b:448). Through their positive nature, legal norms (e.g., laws) can fulfill social integrative functions either coercively through sanctions (e.g., legal consequences for violations) or voluntarily through respect for the law (1996b:448). Modern law incorporates moral reasons (and pragmatic and ethical reasons) through parliamentary deliberations and legislation (1996b:453).

A major difference between morality and law is the “formal properties of legality”. Morality can hold the “convictions and motives” underlying personal conduct open to judgement. The “moral person” must rely on her moral consciousness. This is her final court of appeal. Conversely, law cannot regulate behavior in the same way. The “legal person” has access to a “protective mantle of – morally well grounded – individual liberties” (1998a:201). These liberties or rights demarcate a “legal space” within which an individual can follow her own personal preferences (2001c:114). She can pursue her own understanding of the not-misspent life-project (e.g., career). And, when she goes before the courts, she has legal protection (e.g., due process). Judicial procedures, interpretations, rulings and sanctions are formally prescribed and narrowly circumscribed (1998a:201).

The solidaric relations within a legal order are derived “indirectly” from law. As law stabilizes behavioral expectations, it also establishes symmetrical and reciprocal relationships between legal subjects – “abstract bearers of individual rights”. Habermas argues that only *self-determined* legal orders can be understood as legitimate. Autonomous subjects (citizens) of the law must “understand

themselves also as authors of the law to which they are subject as addressees". On the one hand, according to Habermas' discourse theory, self determination proceeds through processes of "discursively achieved agreement" (1996b:448-449). Three strengths of democratic procedure are: (a) unrestrained availability of "issues", "information", "reasons"; (b) deliberative political decision making (e.g., will-formation); and (c) the reasonableness of outcomes (1996b:448).

On the other hand, the self-determination of a legal order proceeds from both citizens' private and public autonomy. Legal autonomy, therefore, is exercised in two complementary ways: the "public use of communicative liberties"; and the "private use of individual liberties" (1996b:450-451). Habermas' discourse theory presents these forms of autonomy as complementary. They do not limit each other; they presuppose each other (1998a:257-258; 2001c:118). Habermas explains their relationship this way:

on the one hand, citizens can make appropriate use of their public autonomy only if, on the basis of their equally protected private autonomy, they are sufficiently independent; on the other hand, they can realize equality in the enjoyment of their private autonomy only if they make appropriate use of their political autonomy as citizens. (2001c:118)

The legitimization of legal orders within democratic states requires their "co-originality". Individual rights to private autonomy must be complemented by political rights to public autonomy. Public autonomy, which is secured through "rights of communication and participation", is manifested in "politically enfranchised citizens". Private autonomy, which is guaranteed through rights of "life and private liberty", is expressed in the "pursuit of personal life-plans" (2001c:115-116). Habermas claims that problems of social integration within modern complex societies can be addressed by positive law *only* when an "abstract form of civic solidarity" develops around the "realization" of private and public rights (2001c:126).

3.3.4.4 CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY

Habermas explains that, "ideally speaking", the constitutional state is "a voluntary political order" created by members of that state and legitimated by their

“free will-formation” (e.g., deliberative decision making) (1998a:112; 1996b:485). The constitution is a “historical project” undertaken by those who want to order their collective life legitimately through positive law. It guarantees that basic rights (e.g., private and public) necessary for a legitimate legal order can be realized. The use of political power is coded so that institutionalized problem solving and the “procedurally regulated mediation of interests” can be understood as “actualizing a system of rights” (1998a:203). Thus, discourse theory understands the constitutional state as an attempt “to institutionalize the demanding communicative presuppositions and procedures of a network of forms of argumentation and negotiation” (1993:89). A wide range of problems converge within the political realm (moral, ethical, pragmatic). Discursively handling and resolving social problems procedurally, through a “collective will-formation”, creates a “presumption of rationality” (1993:89).

The central institutions of the state (e.g., legislature, administration, courts) should ensure that legal subjects (citizens) can exercise their political autonomy. Accordingly, these institutions must allow communicative power to influence political decisions and programs; and to circulate (e.g., “throughout society”) within the “reasonable” application and administration of legal programs. By stabilizing “expectations” and realizing “collective goals”, a central purpose of politics, social integration, will be achieved (1996b:176). A proceduralist paradigm of law, an approach which Habermas’ advocates, explains the basic conditions necessary for citizens to understand and to resolve their problems (1996b:445).

The proceduralist paradigm stresses the importance of a proactive and “enfranchised” citizenship role within the democratic process. The employee role in the “private-market” and the client role within the welfare state cannot be utilized to redress encompassing social problems (1996b:439). In dealing with society-wide problems, the state must represent public interests. While Habermas acknowledges there is no “patented recipe” for guaranteeing that public interests will be appropriately utilized, he does say there is a “palladium [catalyst] of liberty”, “a suspicious, mobile, alert, and informed public sphere”. By influencing parliamentary

debate and decision making, a robust political public sphere can provide the appropriate source of legitimation for a democratic legal system (1996b:441-442).

The “core” of the proceduralist paradigm of law is found in the networks of communication and public opinion which are “converted into communicative power through democratic procedures”. These communicative networks originate within civil society and the public sphere. Habermas identifies four essential conditions which would enhance communication networks: increasing participation; reorienting political parties away from state influence; monitoring and restraining the media; and cultivating “autonomous public spheres”. For example, greater use of “plebiscitary elements” (direct vote, referendums) would increase participation within the political process. More democratic procedures within political parties (nominating candidates) certainly would temper the influence of administrative power within the public sphere. Monitoring and restraining the media would strengthen the communicative and critical potential of its audiences (1996b:442). Given the importance Habermas attaches to lifeworld resources within a vibrant and functioning public sphere, and given the focus on family within this research, the fourth condition, enhancing autonomous public spheres, requires a little more attention.

Within the proceduralist paradigm, the public sphere is an “impulse-generating periphery that *surrounds* the political center”; it is not a parliamentary “backroom”. Through the normative reasons cultivated and available within everyday life, the public sphere attempts to influence, and not conquer, the political system (1996b:442). Rational political will-formation (e.g., legislative debate and decisions) requires the support of a rationalized lifeworld. Each must, Habermas insists, meet the other halfway (1996b:487).

In one metaphorical description, Habermas indicates that a liberal political culture is the “soil” in which “the institutions of freedom put down their roots”. In other words, it is the base in which and through which lifeworld resources percolate and permeate. He goes on to say that political culture is, at the same time, the “medium” for politically educating the populace (1998a:177). As well, Habermas

suggests that a liberal political culture produces a continuum between prudent self interest, moral insight, and custom. The continuum highlights the distinct differences between strategic interests, critique and tradition. Moral insight, which crystalizes around the equal consideration of all relevant reasons and information (2003d:270), is fundamentally important for practical problem solving.

Political culture is the expression of how individuals within a legal order understand their rights as citizens (1996b:184). As autonomous legal subjects, citizens use their communicative and participatory rights voluntarily. With their private rights, they are free to pursue their own success and interests. With their public rights, they can choose to set aside their private goals and orient themselves towards reaching understanding about a normative disagreement or problem (1996b:130). Participating in the public sphere therefore requires “an orientation to the common good”. This orientation is necessary in order to engage in a “public use of reason”. Law, as well as constitutional democracy, is legitimated when citizens engage in reaching understanding about regulating their common life. Law and democracy therefore depend upon the “motivations” of citizens who are “*accustomed to liberty*” (e.g., argumentation) (1996b:461).

The proceduralist paradigm provides a coherent understanding of the democratic system and its current needs. The paradigm focuses on civil society, which is capable of regulating itself through argumentation. And, It utilizes a “fallible learning process”. The paradigm identifies two endangered resources within complex societies: an economy of nature (e.g., environmental degradation); and social solidarity. One needs rejuvenation; the other needs nurturing. And, it recognizes that human beings are autonomous only when, using insights developed within social interactions, they obey the laws they gave themselves (1996b:444-445). The procedural paradigm also explains that solidarity can be produced within the “communicative practices of self-determination”.

A key feature of Habermas’ discourse theory of democracy and law, which is borrowed from his theory of communicative action, is the idea of openness to change. When normative disputes are settled argumentatively, moral learning

processes lead participants to “broaden their respective social worlds” by including others and by expanding their shared background knowledge (2003d:256). Argumentation makes practical use of knowledge which is resourced from the lifeworld background. Yet, discursive practices also point beyond the lifeworld horizon. The basic assumption underlying discourse is that, “The horizon of every form of life is fluid, its boundaries permeable”. Thus, radical openness to others broadens both our “local knowledge” and our ethnocentric perspective. Decentering ourselves through the moral perspective – through the ideal presuppositions of argumentation – permits us to “extend our community in a virtual manner” to include “all subjects capable of speech and action” (1993:124).

While interpretive horizons must overlap within a discursive agreement, Habermas is not suggesting there should be an “assimilation” or “conversion”. On the contrary, he prefers to call it a “convergence” of perspectives. Convergence involves a perspectival shift for one, several or all participants (1993:105). These shifts reflect the fundamental importance of learning processes within argumentation. Lifeworld resources such as cultural knowledge, relational dependencies and motivations are open to change within everyday discursive practices. Thus, the resources available through lifeworld rationalization are profoundly important for rational discursive processes of self-determination at all levels of social complexity: family, nation-state or global society.

3.3.4.5 RADICAL DEMOCRACY

Habermas’ analysis of social order within modern constitutional democracies extends his theory of communicative action to address the more complex problems associated with forms of socio-political integration. He believes the theory of communicative action provides the “basic assumptions” for understanding the full range of discursive forms and practices: at all levels of social experience – family, the nation-state, or global society; and, for all forms of discursive practice – pragmatic, ethical-existential, ethical-political, or moral-practical. Communicative action’s presuppositions “branch out into various universes of discourse, where they must prove their mettle” (1996b:xxxix).

Habermas maintains that communicative action is not “blind to [the] institutional reality” of modern forms of social order. He suggests that his discourse theory points to the “anarchistic” nature of “unleashed communicative freedoms”, which have been stirred and tempered through lifeworld rationalization. In other words, everything can be drawn into the vortex of problematization. Therefore, all issues and concerns can become the subject of discursive consideration and critique. Within western societies especially, democracies must “live off” of this communicative base (1996b:xl). Legitimate and stable forms of social order must be grounded within everyday communicative practices.

Discourse theory, Habermas contends, provides an analytic framework for reconstructing the “normative self-understanding” of how best to achieve non-oppressive political communities within democratically oriented political systems (1996b:xl-xli). The key, Habermas believes, is the normative basis of a procedural reason within modern democracies. The “normative core”, Habermas states, is the “democratic self-organization of a legal community” of citizens (1996b:xli). Democratic self-organization emphasizes the importance for citizens to discursively determine their own life-conditions. Within a democratic community, participants must reach understanding about the nature and direction of their individual and collective life-projects. Habermas claims that even the socialist project should be understood in these terms. State socialism – the Soviet strategy – “mistook the socialist project for the design” and attempted to establish a particular life-form (1996b:xli).

Furthermore, in this age of “completely secularized politics” (1996b:xlii), the rule of law (e.g., or the constitutional state; 1996b:39; 1998a:265 footnote #1) can only be maintained by “radical democracy”. A radical democratic order means – in the “final analysis” – that individuals within a democratic community must use their political freedom (e.g., voting, public discourse, civil disobedience) in order to reach agreement about how to legally organize their life-conditions: “They themselves must agree on the relevant aspects under which equals should be treated equally and unequals unequally” (1996b:xlii).

Radical democracy emphasizes the importance of the periphery (e.g., lifeworld practices and contexts) over the center (e.g., state administration and the economy) for establishing political self-determination. Lifeworld's private and public spheres "bear the burden of normative expectations": on the one hand, an "intact private sphere" of responsible social actors; and on the other hand, communicative networks within the public sphere nourished by "a liberal political culture" (1997:133). Furthermore, the constitutional state is not possible without a radical democratic foundation (1997:88). A "normative-self understanding", through which citizens see themselves as the authors of the laws they follow, creates a "certain dynamic" within social interactions. The constitution becomes "a project" in the process of becoming (1997:145). With this future openness in mind, Habermas refers to a constitution as "the project of a just society" (1996b:384).

And, as Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange model so clearly emphasizes, social solidarity is fundamentally important to radical democratic initiatives. Habermas holds that social solidarity – "the resource that is actually endangered" – must be "preserved in legal structures" and must be continually reproduced (1996b:xlii). The intersubjective and consensual nature of Habermas' discourse theory emphasizes the importance of the productive force – the solidarity generating force – of communicative action (2001c:154ff).

The emancipative energies necessary for a just society require normative resources which, Habermas claims, are most developed within Western societies. He specifically identifies the need for advanced productive capacities and legally institutionalized democratic practices (1994b:75). These basic, societal capacities – meeting material needs and democratic self-determination – are necessary for reasoned actions with emancipating effects. And, both of these capacities require the resources of a rationalized lifeworld.

As soon as society is understood discursively, that is as linguistically constituted and reproduced, the lifeworld-system dynamic assumes a very distinct normative dimension. For example, within civil society's public sphere, and even more so within the political public sphere, specific demands are made in respect to

the state and the economy: individual freedom for charting life-trajectories, “prosperity”, “justice”, and “political participation”. Meeting these demands requires a shifting of the forces of social integration: money, administrative power and solidarity. Radical democratization of civil society’s communicative potential would yield two important consequences: first, a “‘depoliticization’ of state administration” and the empowerment of everyday discursive practice; and, second, the potential to sensitize the economy to “its external costs” (1994b:82), such as poverty and ecological risks.

Habermas makes several qualifications in respect to the consequences of radical democratization. First, he is careful to point out that the relation between “capitalist modernization and political freedom” is not one that is necessarily linear or positive. Progress in one does not necessarily lead to progress in the other. Not all capitalistically developed countries allow political freedoms (1994b:84). Europe and North America, however, certainly present themselves as examples where formal democratization and capitalism appear concomitant and coterminous. Second, countries with established “democratic conditions” and practices (e.g., political public spheres), those in Europe and North America for example, have the best chance for successfully critiquing and resisting colonizing tendencies by either the state administration or by the economy (1994b:86). Third, explaining and analyzing capitalist modernization does not mean “approving of it” (1994b:95).

Habermas argues that radical democracy involves the capacity for self-criticism and self-transformation, thereby allowing the West to move beyond Eurocentrism, and imperialism. Accessing this better spirit means being dialogically open to learning from other cultures. To do this the West must decenter itself from itself. Western societies must “relativize” themselves in respect to “strangers”, to those who are “misunderstood”, and to the oppressed. In so doing, past Eurocentric “wounds” (e.g., imperialism, colonization) may be treatable “if not healed” (1994b:95-96).

Reasoned action oriented to the “common good”, however, requires “the practice of a little more solidarity”. And, the practice of solidarity is dependent upon

the discursively and institutionally available normative resources. Individuals must be able to engage in a “public struggle” in order to determine the best form their democratic institutions should take (1994b:96). Discourse theory sets very strong normative demands for democratic processes. These demands can be fulfilled only through the higher-level intersubjectivity of discursive practices within the public sphere, only within a decentered society, and only with a “realignment” of the central resources which integrate and steer modern societies (solidarity, money, power) (1996b:298).

Solidarity within modern democratic nation-states takes a distinct form. It is an “abstract, legally mediated solidarity between strangers”. And, it can only develop within a “socializing communicative context” (e.g., liberal political culture). The context must be oriented to achieving consensus or understanding (1998a:159). In fact, the only way solidarity can be reproduced within complex societies is through “communicative practices of self-determination” (1996b:445). The constitutional state establishes social integration abstractly through political participation (1998a:159).

Habermas delimits the “core” preconditions for establishing a political context for an abstract civic solidarity as follows:

The core is formed by a political public sphere which enables citizens to take positions at the same time on the same topics of the same relevance. This public sphere must not be deformed through either external or internal coercion. It must be embedded in the context of a freedom-valuing political culture and be supported by a liberal associational structure of a civil society. Socially relevant experience from still-intact private spheres must flow into such a civil society so that they may be processed there for public treatment. (1998a:160)

Obviously, there is more demand than supply for these core conditions within most societies. Few nations come close to fulfilling them. Furthermore, democratic opinion- and will-formation within global social relations is still in an embryonic state.

3.3.4.6 COMMENTS

Before concluding this chapter, three summary comments about openness are offered. First, the characteristic openness of the public sphere to a wide range

of themes and participants has a Janus face. On one side, openness brings vulnerability (manipulation, coercion, distortion); on the other side openness brings opportunity (cooperation, consensus, solidarity). The informal public sphere has distinct advantages over the formal. In particular, there is the potential for freer and broader discussions of new problems, and of collective identities and needs. However, to be effective, an informal public sphere requires equal citizenship rights which are actually used. Habermas compares the public sphere of citizens to an “an egalitarian public of citizens”. An egalitarian public which is free from “social stratification and exploitation” offers hope for true cultural pluralism (1996b:307-308).

Second, solidarity is produced and reproduced spontaneously within the communicative practices of everyday life. Discourse theory locates these practices within autonomous public spheres of the lifeworld. Within pluralistic societies, or within global society, solidarity between strangers can only ensue from the discursive resolution (“communicative mastery”) of society-wide conflicts (1996b:308).

And, third, within modern social orders characterized by multiple “individual life projects and collective life forms”, where socialized individuals have responsibility for their own life-decisions (1993:150), universal consensual agreement is achievable only through procedural and legitimate democratic opinion- and will-formation practices. Radical democratic practices involving egalitarian relationships (e.g., equal citizenship status) generate solidaric relations capable of establishing a non-oppressive form of life. Given that rationalized lifeworlds can generate “new bonds and normative arrangements”, the wellsprings of solidarity are open, even at the global level (2001c:154). Communication is a ‘productive force’ which can emancipate. The more radical the democratic foundation, the more rationalized the lifeworld background, the greater the potential for establishing a better way of life. Figure 3.1 represents the directional patterns of the three societal steering mechanisms within the lifeworld and system interchange.

3.4 CONCLUSION

The importance of our everyday discursive practices for developing just and peaceful social relations with others, and especially with strangers, is clear. Habermas' discourse ethics identifies the normative resources necessary for members of modern, pluralistic societies to discursively and procedurally work out a better way of life for themselves. The limitations and needs of actual political projects can be evaluated against this backdrop. Discourse theory provides an analytic framework for critiquing, and for subsequently changing, inadequate and oppressive social formations. The social action – social order – social change dynamic (see Figure 1.1) is a simple representation of this framework. Social action (discourse) produces social order (better way of life). Obviously, the material and normative conditions under which deliberative decision making processes take place can either facilitate or limit this process. Still, it appears the key for working out a better way of life resides with our everyday discursive practices.

Three fundamental characteristics of moral-practical discourse – impartialness, embeddedness, openness – were used as guiding themes for the discussion of Habermas' views on social order. The impartialness of moral discourse reflects a basic concern with justice, solidarity and law. Within modern pluralistic societies, impartial and universal normative standards are necessary for establishing and maintaining social order. Because of the demanding presuppositions of argumentation, moral-practical discourse offers the potential for deliberatively establishing a well ordered form of life

The legitimacy of any social order depends upon egalitarian universalism (equal respect and mutual solidarity). Since justice (equal respect) and solidarity (solidaristic responsibility) are internally related, both must be protected at the same time. Both morality and law safeguard the autonomy of each individual to make her own choices, while also securing her membership as one of us. And, both morality and law are concerned with problems of social order, with finding legitimate and consensual solutions, and with procedures which give reasonable results. As well, both moral norms and legal norms are produced and reproduced through discursive

practices. One significant advantage of law over morality is that it can circulate throughout all action systems. Positive law can also make up for motivational deficits within moral decision making. It is coercive. Because of the rational-procedural nature of legal orders, and because morality can speak through discursively produced legal norms, law provides an impartial and legitimate means for establishing well-ordered relationships.

Embeddedness is the characteristic of moral discourse which reflects the internal connection between morality and ethics. Habermas conceptualizes the moral perspective as an idealized extension of the ethical perspective. The moral community becomes an unimpaired reflection (a “better self”) towards which ethical communities *should* turn when resolving societal problems. A moral perspective is the only way to obtain an “ethically neutral conception of justice” (1998a:28, 29) capable of meeting everyone’s interest. After all, on the one hand, the impartiality of a moral judgement rests upon universal “rational acceptability” (2003d:272). And, on the other hand, the regulative effect of moral attitudes and feelings are internally connected to everyday “reasons and discursive exchanges”. They are part of an uninterrupted flow of life-experience. Since “reasons have the last word in practical discourse” (2003d:273), and since reasons have their origin in everyday life (a lifeworld horizon), we cannot have independence from our social world.

Furthermore, embeddedness means moral agreements are fallible. New information and circumstances may require the reevaluation of an existing agreement (moral norm) (2003d:272, 273). Embeddedness also means that individuation is intersubjective in nature. We are individuated only as we are socialized. And, greater individuation means greater reliance on others (e.g., for meeting everyday needs, accomplishing collective tasks or goals). As well, the feelings and attitudes (e.g., abhorrence, resentment, shame) we experience in the present have their learning correlates within our early life-experiences. In other words, morality is learned within particular families, localized communities, specific religions and unique traditions. Finally, embeddedness means that without some functional semblance of a rationalized lifeworld background (e.g., shared beliefs,

common associational bonds, liberating socialization practices) moral argumentation becomes voiceless.

The final characteristic, openness, captures the essence of a deliberative procedure for resolving social problems and for coordinating interactions within contemporary complex and pluralistic societies. Habermas' discourse theory locates the normative core of modern constitutional democracies within autonomous communicative processes which develop within civil society. Within these forms of 'higher-level intersubjectivity' (e.g., formal parliamentary debate, informal discursive practices within public spheres), public views and concerns about society-wide issues coalesce. They are filtered and refined, and become the basis for reasoned arguments within formal parliamentary debates and, ultimately, within legislation. Influence becomes communicative power which is transformed into administrative power (e.g., laws).

Western democracies 'live off' this lifeworld centered communicative practice of radical self-determination. Given that the measure of a radical democratic practice is its capacity for self-criticism and self-transformation, there is an openness to moral learning. Societal (moral) learning processes occur when discursive practices are procedural (e.g., elections, parliamentary debate) and inclusive (e.g., radical democracy). Radically democratic communicative practices have a solidarity generating (productive) force capable of opposing the other two societal steering mechanisms, money and power. Within Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange, the options and their consequences seem obvious: systemic colonization of everyday life, or solidaric practices which can establish non-oppressive and well-ordered forms of life.

Habermas contends that the very "point of linguistic communication" can be derived from the demands of social integration. In order for individual members of complex societies to meet their needs peacefully, "independently deciding participants" must communicatively "coordinate their action plans" (2003d:164). However, a social order which is established and maintained through argumentative practices, "exist[s] through the recognition of normative validity claims" (1996b:17).

Yet, reducing the social integration of society to free-floating consensus formation or reaching agreement places society's reproductive capacities on "fragile ground".

Nevertheless, modern positive law can stabilize this fragile ground. By establishing an artificial community of "free and equal" legal subjects, social integration can proceed either by rational agreement or by threat of sanction (1996b:8). Law removes individual responsibility for reaching understanding because of its positive and rational nature. As a "legitimate order", law is part of lifeworld's society component. And, similarly to communicative reproduction of lifeworld, law reproduces itself through legal actions. Unlike morality, law can speak to the economy and administration in their own language codes. The voice of morality therefore has to circulate through legal norms.

Deliberative democracy places high normative expectations upon the autonomous public spheres of civil society. These communicative spaces foster the development of opinion- and will-formation regarding political or societal issues. As this communication flow becomes directed into the formal political arena, public opinion can influence the decisions of elected legislators. The opinions which are shaped in autonomous public spheres draw their energy from everyday, private experience(s). Habermas' insistence upon the importance of rationalized lifeworld resources meeting deliberatively filtered political communications halfway (1998a:252) is both understandable and predictable. It is also reasonable to suggest that lifeworld and material resources would be more developed within Western democracies. Democratic political culture fosters an expectation of freedom and open communication. And, it is not surprising that Habermas concludes that lifeworld rationalization bears considerable normative weight within deliberative politics. Greater normative expectations on lifeworld mean that the three available resources for steering society (solidarity, money, power) should be realigned (1996b:299).

Figure 3.1 illustrates the central elements within Habermas' argument. If members of a society want to establish a better way of life, then solidarity must be able to exert itself against the non-linguistic steering media, money and

administrative power. According to Habermas' discourse theory, lifeworld interests, needs and concerns can speak to functionally integrated systems, but only indirectly through communicative power and law, only by the conversion of communicative power into administrative power. A new balance of these resources is necessary in order for members of society to establish a better way of life. For Habermas, autonomous and rational discursive practices in the public sphere hold promise for nurturing solidaric relations, orienting action and influencing system. Chapter Four, will examine social change in relation to Habermas' views on the public sphere and family.

CHAPTER FOUR

HABERMAS AND SOCIAL CHANGE: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION, SOLIDARITY AND EMANCIPATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Habermas has always been concerned with establishing “‘friendly’ forms of coexistence”, forms which preserve the advantages of differentiated societies and which respect the autonomy of individuals who are at the same time dependent upon each other (2004b:6). Friendly forms therefore have to be democratic, egalitarian and just. Only utopian conceptions of a well ordered society fit this image. Although the challenge of establishing a peaceful coexistence within modern complex societies is daunting, the alternative, force, is unthinkable to him. Language, he believes, has the power to “forge something in common” (2004b:4). Through reaching consensus discursively it is possible for individuals to establish a better, emancipated, way of life. Thus, moral practical solutions to the catalogue of problems and issues currently confronting us – genocide, ethnic cleansing, terrorism, mass starvation, arms trafficking, environmental pollution, globalized networks of markets – are possible.

Moral-practical answers to social problems mean that as members of a national or global society we must be able to develop friendly forms of life through our own efforts, guided by our own concerns (“needs and insights”) (1989a: 299). This is possible because lifeworld rationalization has released our communicative practices from a traditional and ascriptive background consensus. We now must

coordinate our interactions through our own interpretive accomplishments. Everyday communicative practices, therefore, are “ingrained” with the potential for social change (1984b:398). However, Habermas claims we must also “practice a little more solidarity” or our communicative practices will be “foundationless and inconsequential” (1994b:96-97). A common need and willingness to act, to participate, to collaborate, flows out of shared risks and problems. Indeed, in a family or in a democratic nation-state, “our interests are bound up with the interests of others” (1991c:44). A discursively achieved consensus must account for our interdependence.

Habermas believes that opportunities for rationalized (moral-practical) modes of action for dealing with society wide problems need to be opened. His theory of communicative action and discourse theory point toward social spaces where only reasons count for coordinating actions, toward legitimate public spaces for fostering and supporting solidarity and communicative power, and toward a process of social change. Social orders adapt to changing historical circumstances and social needs through their problem solving capacities. The voice of reason – the rational potential of argumentation – must be able to *speak* to problems concerning the normative regulation of social life. Problem solving is a moral learning process.

Moral learning processes involve “an intelligent expansion and reciprocal interpenetration of social worlds that in a given case of conflict do not yet sufficiently overlap” (2003d:105). We learn when we encounter “resistance” from others who hold different value orientations (2003d:265, also 256). Action is rational when social actors learn from dealing with their problems and mistakes. Solutions to problems which are generated through reaching agreement (about validity claims and good reasons) can be evaluated as learning processes (1984b:66). When background assumptions open and close within argumentation, learning can occur through the “power of revision” (2003d:78). Moral learning occurs within our interactive coping experiences (2003d:78). On the one hand, learning processes point toward an emancipatory potential which inheres our everyday discursive practices. On the other hand, they also reveal how social actions, which are

discursively linked in practices of reaching understanding, can develop into complex, layered networks of interactions.

Habermas' theory of rationalization can be used to understand the social action – social order – social change dynamic underlying his lifeworld-system interchange model. Lifeworld rationalization, understood as the expansion of the “rational potential of action oriented toward reaching understanding” within everyday life (1987a:346), creates the conditions necessary for the development of autonomous, functionally integrated media-steered subsystems. Systemic media (money, power), which are modeled on language, become relief mechanisms for increasing action coordination demands placed on language. However, the capacity of language to consensually coordinate action cannot be taken over by a functionally integrated system.

Also, reaching understanding has the advantage of being able to moralize society wide problems. Inclusive and open discourses can bring about normative agreements based on the best reason(s). Ordinary language can bring these moralized problems or issues into the political realm where everyday concerns can be transformed into policies, laws and programs. Thus, while social order issues from social action, so too does social change. For Habermas, the action – order – change dynamic has profound implications for social stratification and inequality, and for the kinds of social change possible. Individual life-potentials and life-projects as well as complex national and global life-orders are all patterned by the nature of this dynamic.

In this chapter, a discursive understanding of the action – order – change dynamic will be used to study the emancipatory potential within two divergent social spaces, global society and family. Although theorizing family has not been a priority for Habermas, it is a central issue this research addresses. The ensuing discussion of social change will highlight the political public sphere (section 4.2). The following section (4.3) will focus on family. The discursive production of solidarity is a critical theme in both.

4.2 SOCIAL CHANGE

4.2.1 INTRODUCTION

Habermas' theory of modernity identifies family and the public sphere as central social contexts in which the rational potential of communicative action has been loosened from traditional normative contexts: "In modern societies there is such an expansion of the scope of contingency for interaction loosed from normative contexts that the inner logic of communicative action 'becomes practically true' in the deinstitutionalized forms of intercourse of the familial private sphere as well as in a public sphere stamped by the mass media" (1987c:403). Considering the significance attributed to the rational capacity (normative content) of everyday discursive practices to generate an emancipated form of life within modern complex societies, a heavy burden of proof is placed upon family and the public sphere. Specifically, what and how do they contribute to an emancipatory potential?

Family (private sphere) and the public sphere represent core lifeworld spaces (see Figures 2.4, 2.5, and 2.7) which are differentiated in terms of their communicative practices. The private sphere and public sphere are constituted by "different conditions of communication" (1996b:366). Discursively, they represent different levels of communicative sociation on a spectrum of privacy to publicity. Family is characterized by the private nature of communications, whereas the public sphere is oriented to debate, to publicity. Habermas' overriding concern with moral-practical issues and larger societal structures means that the public sphere has taken a more central role in his thought. One social space in particular is important, the political public sphere. The political public sphere, a social space for rational debate, is the "fundamental concept" within Habermas' theory of democracy. He feels it captures the normative content of a public communicative practice which aims at resolving societal problems through "public reasoning" (1992a:446).

4.2.2 LIFEWORLD RATIONALIZATION

Lifeworld rationalization is a "world-historical process" involving the "release of a potential for reason embedded in communicative action" (1985a:101). Habermas' notion of lifeworld rationalization denotes the expansion of the "rational

potential of action oriented toward reaching understanding” within everyday life (1987a:346), through argumentative processes (e.g., pragmatic, ethical, moral). The more complex lifeworlds become, the greater the capacity for coordinating interactions rationally and communicatively (1987a:349). Although participants in argumentation must presuppose “[f]reedom from domination” in order to reach consensus, real life-conditions, in which argumentation takes place, are neither power free nor domination resistant. Over against a “crumbling” and “prejudiced” (e.g., ascribed, predetermined) lifeworld background consensus, lifeworld rationalization suggests that everyday discursive practices can provide the normative resources for emancipatory energies to develop. As the demand for communicatively coordinating interactions expands, new consensual agreements must come from either “participants themselves” (via discourse) or non-linguistic media (via strategic action) (1985a:101).

Lifeworld rationalization is the conceptual core for understanding Habermas’ model of (communicative) intersubjectivity. Individuals link up their interactions discursively. Dense, broad webs of relational patterns radiate from simple interactions. Understanding social existence in terms of a “circular” process of communication between individuals on the one hand and between “lifeworlds” and “systems” on the other hand, focuses attention on the forces which hold society together: lifeworld solidarity and systemic (non-linguistic) media, money and power. In the end, establishing peaceful and emancipated forms of life requires the balance between these basic integrative resources to be shifted in favor of lifeworld needs and concerns. And, this shift hinges upon the productive capacity of everyday discursive practices to generate new bonds of solidarity as the basis for influencing system. Habermas therefore focuses upon the solidarity generating capacity of a political public sphere. Recently Habermas described the balance of resources (solidarity, and money and power) since World War II as “precarious”, and even then, only for a “happy few” (western) nations (2000a:3).

Traditionally, individual biographies and forms of life were in large measure ascribed. For example, life-practices were normatively secured within an historically

established, socio-cultural system involving “birth, family, marital partner, career, and political position”. However, as these “normatively bundled” life-experiences became subject to the interpretive accomplishments of social actors, basic biographic and life-plan decisions became open and changeable. Individuals became responsible for their own “coordinative and integrative” decisions regarding marriage (and divorce), education, career, politics (1992b:195). Of course, these decision making processes are intersubjectively embedded within existing networks of communicative sociation. Through its common store of values, norms, cultural knowledge, and socialization practices, lifeworld provides members with “enabling resources” (e.g., meanings, normative expectations, attitudes) for communicative action (2001c:152) and for discourse, and therefore for social change.

Social modernization and increasing pluralism tend to dissolve “ascriptive ties to family”, as well as bonds to “locality, social background, and tradition” (2001c:82-83). Consequently, individuals have become increasingly responsible for realizing their own life-histories and developing their collective life-forms, using their own normative resources. Within everyday communicative practices, each person has to rely on her lifeworld background of cultural knowledge, values, norms and socialization patterns as enabling resources for reaching understanding and agreement (2001c:152). With each new agreement the lifeworld opens and closes, available once again for interpretive discursive practices. The dissolution of traditional, “strongly integrated lifeworlds” means that new social bonds must be constructed. The highly presuppositioned practice of argumentation set loose within lifeworld rationalization can generate solidarity – “the social bond of all with all” – through everyone’s interests being given equal consideration. The cooperative project of reaching consensus binds each individual to her community (1987a:346-347). According to Habermas, lifeworld rationalization holds considerable promise for developing emancipated familial relationships.

Lifeworld members (e.g., married couple) develop their solidaric relations from “inherited values and norms” and from “established and standardized” communicative practices. While everyone is embedded within specific cultural

traditions and ways of living, ascriptive and normalized responses no longer have the same hold on everyday communicative sociation or practice as they once did. Lifeworld rationalization provides its own mechanism for “generating new bonds and normative arrangements” (2001c:154). Participants in discourse, can rely on their own interpretive accomplishments (1987a:342) to resolve issues and solve problems. For example, a married couple may discuss what make of vehicle to purchase, which working partner will remain at home to care for a sick child, who will do which household chores, whose religious faith the children will learn.

Thus, communicative sociation enables both a reproductive (e.g., communicative action) and productive (argumentation) function. On the one hand, when validity claims are not challenged, we routinely reproduce our background assumptions through our communicative actions. On the other hand, communicative practices also have a productive capacity. The “productive force of communication” is capable of replacing old forms of solidarity with new ones, within intimate interactions (e.g., between family members) or within complex and abstract relations (e.g., between citizens) (2001c:154 ; 1996b:148). For instance, as relational ties strengthen or loosen in the face of new problems and new circumstances, participants can re-affirm or replace established bonds (e.g., new friendships, divorce and remarriage). Thus, according to Habermas’ theory of lifeworld rationalization, the networks of communicative actions which extend over time and across increasingly complex social space are open to change; they are by no means permanent artifacts.

Within modern societies, Habermas argues, the decoupling of social interaction from “normative contexts” means that the rational potential of reaching consensus becomes “empirically effective” for steering social interactions, for maintaining social life, and for resolving social problems and conflicts. For Habermas, lifeworld rationalization has an “emancipating and unburdening” potential (2001c:156) at all levels of social relations, including family (1987b:387). The potential implications for family are significant: egalitarian relationships, individuated discourses and liberated childrearing practices. Lifeworld

rationalization has brought, and continues to bring, “epochal changes” within social life generally, and family life specifically. Habermas characterizes these ongoing changes as “the growing autonomy of a nuclear family” (1987c:88, 387, 403). Following a discussion of communicative sociation, private and public spheres, and solidarity, a Habermasian framework for understanding family change is developed.

4.2.3 COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION

Because we are socially and historically constituted through our communicative sociations, we find ourselves situated within linguistically structured forms of life. Within our associational lives, language is encountered as a “transcending power”. Language is a “common medium” shared “intersubjectively”; no one has power over the “structure” or “course” of achieving consensus regarding our world and ourselves. Each participant is free to exercise her ‘yes/no’ position in regards to contestable validity claims. And each participant’s subjectivity is preceded and grounded within the “power of the intersubjective”. Consequently, we work out our identities intersubjectively, “in a common endeavour” of construction or renewal (2004a:39). The power of intersubjectivity, through discourse, Habermas argues, has the unique capacity to unite strangers (“the disparate”) while at the same time respecting their differences (2004b:4).

Language has the power “to forge something in common” by enabling agreement (2004b:4). The primary use of language is communicative, not cognitive. As such, it provides everyone “access to the world” rather than simply mirroring the world. Language does orient the way we see the world. Yet the prior knowledge embodied within it is changeable; it is not “fixed once and for all”. Furthermore, we learn “*from one another*” as we communicate (2004b:3-5). Therefore interactive competence (2001b:135) is critical to our successful participation in discursive practices, and to successfully planning and organizing our lives. The normative assumption underpinning interactive competence is that we can and will engage in reaching consensus, even during conflicts. Our intersubjective competence is measured by our ability to maintain communicative action (2001b:135-136). As well, the release of the rationality potential of our

communicative practices (e.g., reaching understanding based on good reasons) also depends upon this competence. Communicative reason (e.g., the use of language to reach understanding through validity claims) is therefore “always at work” in both argumentation and everyday communicative action (2001c:151-152). It is embedded within all forms of life.

Communicative reason does not prejudge our background knowledge: for instance, our preferred value orientations. If it were to do so, decisions would be precast, just as traditional modes of thought ascribed normative behavior. If learning is to be transcendental, all “world-interpretive linguistic knowledge” must be revisable. The alternative is rather disillusioning – imprisonment within “epochal interpretations of the world”. Habermas contends that communicative (“procedural”) reason “operates with context-transcending validity *claims* and with pragmatic *presuppositions*.” (1998d:126). Ideal pragmatic presuppositions serve a methodological purpose – reaching agreement – and do not represent or foretell a substantive reality. Future life-forms must devolve from our communicative sociations.

Communicative sociation refers to the way social life, or, more specifically, social interaction, is integrated. That is, social action is organized through our deliberate, conscious and reflective efforts to achieve consensus and to cooperatively pursue goals. Within communicative sociation, we coordinate our interactions with others through our action orientations. An action orientation refers to the values, norms and competencies which both guide and limit decisions about what we mean, what our goals should be and how we should achieve those goals. Communicative sociation is based on achieving consensus and on cooperatively pursuing life-plans (1984b:341,342; 1987c:232-233; 1991a: 252-253). Family is one key social context (area of lifeworld) in which everyday life-activities are communicatively organized.

Social interactions which are discursively integrated generate a consensual basis for social order (e.g., lifeworld). Alternatively, interactions integrated through non-linguistic media (money, power) establish a functional foundation for social

order (e.g., system) (1991a:251-252). System, a second order developmental process, differentiated out of lifeworld's society component. Lifeworld therefore establishes the pattern of development for the whole system (e.g., lifeworld rationalization). It provides a more comprehensive foundation for examining the social action-social order dynamic in terms of the individual-society relationship, social order and social change. Reaching consensus becomes a limit case for understanding the potential for social change.

When confronted with social contingencies such as differing beliefs, values and needs, social actors must engage in a process of consensus formation in order to establish the appropriate normative standards for a cooperative and legitimate coexistence (2003d:173). For the most part, our everyday communicative practices are routine. We simply utilize and reconfirm background certainties such as cultural knowledge, relational dependencies and motivations. Consensus, whether routinely achieved or discursively argued, is possible only if everyday communicative processes are embedded within a shared lifeworld, within "shared assumptions and practices" (1990:25). Reaching agreement therefore requires that our variant lifeworlds sufficiently overlap (2003d:105). Children experience the challenge of overlapping lifeworlds as their learning experience expands from their unofficial home environment to include the official world of school.

Our everyday discursive practices involve a recursive learning process. As life-experiences are tested against lifeworld certainties, the structural components of the lifeworld are either reproduced (e.g., communicative action) or changed (e.g., argumentation) (1991a: 224). This learning processes links lifeworld contexts and resources with new problems and new situations. When social actors communicatively reach a common understanding about a practical issue (e.g., how household chores will be distributed), they are developing, confirming and renewing their beliefs, their normative expectations and their motivations and attitudes (1987c:137, 139). These new accomplishments then become part of the background resources they use in further communicative interactions. They also become accessible for use in future discursive practices by future generations

(1987c:138). Meanings, expectations and skills, are utilizable, storable, renewable and changeable.

Furthermore, reaching agreement can be understood as a moral learning process: “an intelligent expansion and reciprocal interpenetration of social worlds that in a given case of conflict do not yet sufficiently overlap”. As participants adopt a decentered perspective, the “disputing parties learn to include one another in a world they construct together”. Perspectival interpenetration is a necessary requisite for universal (“complete”) inclusiveness, and therefore for rational discourse. Since rational discourse is both inclusive and open to equal consideration of all positions, and since only normative standards which are “equally good for all” deserve acceptance, it is well suited for resolving action coordinating conflicts (2003d:105).

The following five summary statements situate the learning process within lifeworld’s private and public spheres. First, because individuals cannot not learn, “ontogenetic learning processes acquire pacemaker functions” for social change (1985a:90). Second, both individuals and societies can learn. Societies, however, learn only metaphorically or derivatively, through individual learning processes (1985a:89; 1979a:121, 154). Third, society wide issues and problems must become “public conflicts”; they must be re-moralized (1991c:43). Problems such as nuclear blackmail, terrorism, environmental degradation, need to become discursive issues within the political public sphere. Public interest and opinion regarding these problems must be garnered within public debate. They must be made politically relevant. Fourth, Habermas’ theory of discourse leaves future possibilities as just that, future possibilities: “There are no laws of history in the strict sense” (1998c:123). Only participants in discourse can construct a future (1973:40; 1994b:101). And fifth, discourse theory points toward consensus formation within everyday communicative practices, legitimate public spaces for argumentation and a process of social change.

4.2.4 PRIVATE SPHERE AND PUBLIC SPHERE

The private and public spheres of the lifeworld are described by Habermas as complementary, socially integrated, communicative spheres of action. The primary distinguishing feature of these action spheres is the nature of the communicative interactions, or the “conditions of communication” (1996b:366). Communicative sociation within the private sphere is characterized by its intimacy. Intimacy insulates the private sphere from the publicity or publicness characteristic of the public sphere. Within the private sphere, individual life-histories are interconnected through “face-to-face interactions”. These personal, communicative sociations are typical of the relational patterns between marital partners, “relatives”, “friends” and “acquaintances” (1996b:354). Core private spheres such as family and friendships involve “thick networks of interaction”. As the circle of lifeworld contacts extends out to neighbors, co-workers, and other acquaintances, communicative interactions tend to become “looser” (1996b:365).

The public sphere, however, is oriented towards argumentative practices which are inclusive, non-oppressive and open to the better argument. Within this communicative space for argumentation, participants can make contributions to the same topics at the same time with the same relevance (1998a:160; 1997:177). Discursive practice provides a public “arena” for detecting, identifying, interpreting and solving society wide problems (1998a:25). Within the public sphere, Habermas notes, conflicts are understood and treated as “social products” (versus “natural phenomena”) which are “changeable” (2001c:59). As public opinion is discursively filtered and honed, solidary ties develop through which citizens can influence political administrations. Everyday needs and concerns become transformed into opinions which can be brought to bear on political decision making, policy formation and programming. Ideally, a robust public sphere can moralize law and thereby influence system.

Still, the private and public spheres remain intimately linked. On the one hand, the private sphere is the recruitment center, if you will, for the communicative practices of the public sphere (1996b:354). For example, the impact of society wide

problems within individual life-histories (e.g., domestic violence, child neglect) becomes the subject matter of public debate (1996b:366). On the other hand, the structures of mutual recognition and the normative conditions underlying intimate face-to-face relations are “expanded and abstracted” within the public sphere. For instance, the orientation to reaching understanding which permeates everyday communicative practices is also foundational for “*communication among strangers*” within the public sphere (1996b:365-366). Consensus formation through discourse means all voices should be heard and considered. The different “conditions of communication” which predominate within each of these spheres serve only to channel issues (“topics”) from the private into the public realm of discourse. These spheres differ in terms of their “accessibility” (1996b:366).

While family and friendships, two core social spaces within the private sphere, are characterized by privacy and intimacy, they are not therefore devoid of discourse. Discourse can occur in all lifeworld contexts (e.g., regarding abortion, same sex marriage). Even the perceived fairness of a discursively established compromise between a wife and husband or between a parent and child is contingent upon the rationality of the procedure and rules governing the (informal) bargaining process. However, the demanding pragmatic presuppositions of argumentation (e.g., inclusiveness, openness, non-oppressive) are satisfied to a greater extent within public as opposed to private spaces. Discourse extends the presuppositions of communicative action universally: “Discourse generalizes, abstracts, and stretches the presuppositions of context-bound communicative actions by extending their range to include competent subjects beyond the provincial limits of their own particular form of life” (1990:202).

Moral discourse, however, cannot speak to society as a whole. In order for morality to be effective beyond local contexts, it must be translated into “legal code” (1996b:110). Because law is a medium of communication which can speak “to all legitimately ordered spheres of interaction” (1998a:252), it transfers the relations of reciprocity and symmetry, which are typical of communicative action and argumentation within simple interactions, “to the abstract level of organized

relationships” (1996b:437; also 438). “Law is the only medium in which it is possible reliably to establish morally obligated relationships of mutual respect even among strangers” (1996b:460). A legally mediated solidarity is produced through “political participation” (2001c:76) within public processes of deliberative opinion- and will-formation (e.g., town hall meetings, parliamentary debates and decisions). Solidarity will remain intact as long as the democratic process “fulfills recognized standards of social justice” (2001c:76). Considering Habermas’ concern with moral-legal issues concerning social justice and emancipation, it is understandable that private sphere experience (family) becomes relegated to the background. The next section focuses on solidarity and the relational dynamic between solidarity and justice.

4.2.5 SOLIDARITY

Habermas’ theory of lifeworld rationalization claims that individuals have become responsible for producing, “on their own”, the “provisions” (e.g., solidarity, norms, laws) needed for their continued survival (2001c:155). Two major consequences for modern social life have devolved: (a) individualized life-projects; and (b) pluralized life-forms. And, both of these life-conditions reflect the paradoxical nature of communicative sociation. (a) Individuals have greater autonomy for communicatively and cooperatively pursuing their own life-goals and charting their own life-histories. Life-histories have become life-projects of self-realization. Individuals must responsibly plan, coordinate and adapt their own life-projects in contexts where others also have the same freedom (e.g., family). However, with autonomy comes the opportunity for greater “mobility” (e.g., for life-choices) and the consequent pressures on everyday “personal bonds” (2001c:87). On the one hand, individuals have greater freedom for developing their own life-projects. On the other hand, solidary durability (e.g., length of marriage) can become very fragile (e.g., divorce).

(b) Modern societies are comprised of multiple forms of life, each embodying differing cultural traditions and value orientations. Social heterogeneity places great demands upon societal processes of conflict resolution and of social integration. Since modern social formations tend not to be homogenous, and since there is no

“static framework” or “universally binding ethos” for establishing the common good capable of bridging cultural and value differences, individuals and societies must cooperatively resolve their problems. Under modern conditions of pluralistic worldviews, the moral universe must be understood as a “construct” to be determined, not one which is predetermined (2003d:263). Social order is a project of self-determination. Consensual agreement(s) regarding the collective good – the just – has become a problem in need of solution. In complex societies, survival means coexistence, peacefully hopefully. On the one hand, the potential for cooperative, normative relationships is discursively possible. On the other hand, the demands of pluralism (e.g., competing conceptions of the ‘good’) create the possibility for social fragmentation and the destabilization of social solidarity (2001c:87).

From a very early time in his life, Habermas has sought to understand the sources of a solidarity which could be emancipatory (1997:70; 2004b). Solidarity is a central concept within his understanding of the individual-society relationship, social order and social change. For example, intelligent (rational) action directed against oppression and inequality, he claims, is “foundationless and inconsequential” without solidarity. Social change requires that we “practice a little more solidarity” (1994b:96-97). How to practice solidarity in modern complex societies is a key issue he addresses within his theory of communicative action and his discourse ethics. Applied to the problem of social order within modern pluralistic societies, the practice of solidarity must be underpinned by normative resources (e.g., a cultural openness to democratic discourse) which can facilitate discursive practices oriented toward “the common good” (1994b:96-97). Solidarity, however, does not stand alone. The practice of solidarity requires justice – the assurance that everyone’s interests will be considered equally (2003d:267). What is of central importance for this research is the connection between the voice of reason and solidarity, especially within private life-experience. If rationality has to do with how we “use” knowledge (1998c:219), and if solidarity and justice are internally

connected, then how does the voice of reason, which speaks through our everyday communicative practices, resonate within and filter through our solidary ties?

A more detailed discussion of the nature and importance of solidarity follows several brief introductory comments. First, Habermas summarizes the implications of lifeworld rationalization for everyday life by stating:

As standardized living conditions and career patterns dissolve, and options multiply, individuals come to feel the increasing weight of decisions and arrangements that they now have to make by themselves. The drive toward 'individualization' demands the discovery and the construction of new social regulations. Liberated subjects, no longer bound and directed by traditional roles, have to fashion new commitments by the force of their own communicative efforts alone. (2001c:155-156)

With the dissolution of a traditional "ascriptive background" consensus, social actors must rely on their own communicative efforts to establish and maintain new normative arrangements and new forms of solidarity (2001c:154).

Second, Habermas emphasizes the importance of autonomy within everyday communication. He understands autonomy as the capacity to orient actions toward validity claims, or to follow self imposed laws (1993:45, 118-119). Autonomous actors are not bound by contingencies, preferences, conventions or communal value orientations. Rather, they are open to the influence of rational considerations (e.g., reasons) (2003d:171), and, therefore, to the better argument. Third, by coping with complex and changing social circumstances through the "constructive" accomplishment of reaching understanding with proximal or distal others, social actors cooperatively determine the normative grounds for the legitimate regulation of their coexistence (2003d:173). Fourth, norms of coexistence must be general enough to meet with the agreement of those who wish to live within a just social formation: "such norms can claim legitimacy only to the extent that they govern the broadened spectrum and greater variation of living conditions and options in the equal interest of everyone affected" (2003d:263).

Fifth, the productive capacity of everyday discursive practices can generate and regenerate the solidaric bonds within face-to-face relations (e.g., remarriage)

or between strangers (e.g., opinion- and will-formation within a public forum). Habermas' basic premise is that the bonding energies which hold relationships together (e.g., solidarity) are produced through everyday communicative practices. Within complex societies, members' "private lives" and citizens' "political will formation" are dependent upon a "discursively generated solidarity" (2001c:155). The productive capacity of language (e.g., discourse) points to "the plasticity of historical practices", including socialization, solidarity and politics. Interpersonal relationships, Habermas claims, are contestable and reversible: "No dependence on another person must be irreversible" (2003b:61, 63).

Sixth, within Habermas' discourse theory, solidarity and justice are opposite sides of the same coin (1993:154; also 1998a:10). Where solidarity has to do with the common good, justice concerns what is equally in everyone's interest (1993:151). Since justice extends the social limits of solidarity universally, the discursive practice of consensus formation can have emancipatory outcomes. In other words, the action – order relational dynamic within everyday life need not lead to oppression and stratification.

Seventh, according to Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange model, solidarity must counterbalance the other two societal steering mechanisms, money and power (see Figure 2.6 and Figure 3.1). Functionally integrated action systems (a money-steered economy, a power-steered political administration), which became differentiated from lifeworld in order to relieve social actors from the burden of communicatively coordinating *all* interactions, need to be influenced and moderated by the solidarity producing discursive practices of public opinion- and will-formation. Solidarity, a sense of oneness with others in shared life-settings, is the only resource available for countering the colonizing effects of a global intensification of systemic networks. Solidarity provides the normative basis for establishing a common political will which reflects the needs and interests of society's members. And, solidarity is crucial to a radical democratic process of self-determination, no matter the social referent, society or family.

Eighth, Habermas emphasizes the importance of the “communicative mastery” of social problems for generating solidarity. In fact, within pluralistic societies (or within global society), the discursive resolution of societal (or global) problems and issues is the only source of solidarity between strangers (1996b:308). *Mutatis mutandis*, problemsolving capacities must also generate solidarity at the level of everyday, face-to-face relations, within family for example. Whereas in the former (e.g., societal, global social integration) solidarity is produced through “communicative practices of self-determination” (1996b:445), in the latter (e.g., familial social integration) it is primarily generated within communicative practices of ‘my’ or ‘our’ self-realization. Finally, ninth, in order for social actors to cooperatively reach agreements about common problems, certain requisites or preconditions must be fulfilled: for example, inclusion of everyone concerned, equal opportunity to participate, absence of coercion, and an openness to the better argument (2003d:106-107, 269). The anticipation of these ideal preconditions within both our everyday communicative practices and our argumentation, creates opportunities for social change at all levels of social experience.

Everyday communicative actions can create the kind of bonds upon which participants can immediately rely, and the kinds of bonds which can shape subsequent interaction patterns. As Habermas explains,

Everyday communication is supported by the context of shared background assumptions so that the need to communicate arises especially when the beliefs and intentions of subjects making independent judgements and decisions have to be brought into unison. The practical need to coordinate plans of action is what brings into relief the interlocutors’ expectation that their addressees undertake a commitment regarding their own validity claims. They expect an affirmative or negative response that counts as an answer. For only the intersubjective recognition of criticizable validity claims can generate the kind of commonality on the basis of which bonds can be established on which both sides can rely and which shape subsequent interactions. (2003d:129)

Argumentation moves reaching consensus to a more reflective level. An argumentatively achieved consensus flows out of an agreement regarding the strength of good reasons. Ideally, external or collective authority does not mediate

participants' decisions (2003d:129-130). Even though family is an intense and emotional social location, bonds of oneness grounded within reasonable decision making practices can and should be expected.

Obviously, Habermas discusses the importance of solidarity in a variety of contexts and at different levels of analysis. A central feature of his critical theory is that solidarity originates with and is maintained through our communicative practices. He is particularly concerned with the solidarity producing capacity of discourse within public spaces which are oriented to addressing and resolving societal issues and problems. However, our everyday communicative practices generate and maintain solidary relations within the whole spectrum of interactive contexts, including family. Habermas refers to communicative sociation as a "switching station [mechanism] for the energies of social solidarity" (1987c:57; also 60). Simply, our discursive practices have a productive power. Solidary relations are constituted and reproduced within consensus oriented discursive practices.

Before discussing the meaning and levels of solidarity, four observations are necessary. (a) Habermas clearly identifies the social coordinates of solidarity. Its "proper place", the place where it is generated, refined and reproduced, is within intersubjective relations ("linguistic intersubjectivity"), everyday talk and discourse ("communication"), and socialization practices through which individuation occurs ("individuating socialization") (1993:143). All three characteristics, but especially the latter, suggest the importance of discursively produced solidarity within family. The normative context of family establishes the range of legitimate interpersonal relationships for that shared lifeworld. Language oriented toward reaching consensus is the "medium" through which these "formative processes", socialization and individuation, take place (1992b:48). A few brief remarks about "social individuation" are needed.

Anyone capable of talking and acting becomes individuated through socialization. Habermas states that socialization proceeds "only by communicative action" (2003b:61). We become individuals by "growing into a speech community", by growing into an "intersubjectively shared lifeworld" (1989-90:46). The process

of individuation, “the self-realization of the individual”, has two components: communicative socialization, and the conscious self-appropriation of a life-history. Identity development is contingent upon “intersubjective acknowledgement” and “intersubjectively mediated self-understanding” within everyday discursive practices (1992b:152-153). We become conscious of our individual uniqueness through our discursive embeddedness. The more individuated someone becomes, the more she becomes “caught up” in an increasingly denser and subtler “network of reciprocal dependencies and explicit needs for protection”. And, the more entangled and complex these communicative networks become, the more vulnerable she becomes (1989-90:46). More discourse means more dependency; and more dependency means more vulnerability.

The dependency structure which inheres social individuation means both individual and collective identity need protection: “individuals can stabilize their fragile identities only mutually and simultaneously with the identity of their group” (1989-90:46). Solidarity (oneness) and justice (equal freedom) therefore lay at the heart of individuating socialization. Since collective identity is contingent upon “intact relationships of mutual recognition”, solidarity must be complimented by “equal treatment”. “[E]ach person must take responsibility for the other because as consociates all must have an interest in the integrity of their shared life context in the same way” (1989-90:46).

(b) Habermas proposes that social obligations shift depending upon the relevance of social distance. He refers to the “special obligations” which individuals owe to each other by virtue of their “membership” within families, within friendships, within neighborhoods, and within national/political communities. Reciprocal obligations between parents and children, for example, are “indeterminate”. While acts of “solidarity”, “care” and “commitment” are expected, they cannot be fixed for everyone in all circumstances. Belonging to a particular community carries special obligations which are “socially” ascribed and “substantively” specified but also indeterminate (1996b:510).

There is, however, one clear distinction between special obligations which naturally emerge within familial relationships, or “concrete communities”, and those which devolve from “abstract action coordination” within legal institutions. Within family and friendships, we expect those near to be dear, to “always have priority”, albeit indeterminately. Within legal institutions, obligations are assigned to particular groups of persons: “these institutions socially and substantively specify and make binding those positive duties that otherwise remain indeterminate” (1996b:511). The point is that closeness within family and friendships has a privileged position, even if that position is normatively ascribed by local value standards and only implicitly understood and practiced.

(c) Understood discursively, solidarity, for Habermas, involves choice. As a general rule, we experience solidarity within particular forms of life which we have inherited or critically established. Through the productive capacity of our communicative practices, we “actively choose” these concrete life-forms (1991c:39). We establish family projects; we develop new friendships; we join a social justice organization; we participate in a town hall meeting; we vote in national elections. All of these examples represent instances of solidaric choices.

(d) Habermas has developed an abstractive model of solidarity (see Figure 4.1). Increasing social complexity problematizes the expectation of egalitarian and universalistic practices for political integration. Every political community faces the interconnected problems of self-organization and legitimation. Higher levels of social complexity require a radical abstraction of the communicative conditions which are necessary for solidarity normally experienced within proximal associations (e.g., family) – mutual reciprocity and equal respect. When mutually supportive relations are understood abstractly, concrete ethical practices can be separated from “the symmetries of mutual recognition” common to communicative action. Within modern constitutional states, law becomes a “transmission belt” for conveying these symmetries to “abstract relationships between strangers” (1997:73). At this more abstractive level (e.g., nation state, but also world society), solidarity has to be produced legally, through democratic forms: “In complex

societies, it is the deliberative opinion- and will-formation of citizens, grounded in the principles of popular sovereignty, that forms the ultimate medium for a form of abstract legally constructed solidarity that reproduces itself through political participation” (2001c:76). While constitutional democracies can provide the framework for the abstraction from proximal to distal associational dynamics at the level of nation-state, there are as yet no equivalent structures for a global society.

How then does Habermas explain or define solidarity? When referring to the communicative sociation of participants he states that solidarity is a measure of stable group identity and action coordination. When social integration is disturbed, say by restricting the nature of participation (e.g., who, how and when), social membership within existing legitimate orders may no longer meet the need for coordinating action in new situations (1987c:139ff). More recently, he has explained solidarity as “the bond of a member of a community to her fellow members” (2002b:162-163). He also describes solidarity from a participant’s perspective: “each person regards every other person as ‘one of us’”. Concomitantly, each person also “expect[s] to be treated equally” (1998a:29). The ideas of equal respect and solidaristic responsibility point toward the egalitarian universalism which undergirds rational discourse (2003d:266; 1998a:40).

Another sense of the term emerges as Habermas explains the reciprocal relationship between solidarity and justice within (moral-practical) discourse. These two complex constructs provide alternative but reciprocal ways of understanding everyday communicative practices (1998a:10). In one explanation, he comments that solidarity “refers to the well-being of associated members of a community who inter-subjectively share the same lifeworld”, and who communicatively coordinate their plans and activities. Justice signifies the modern notion of autonomy and individuality (1990:200).

In another context, Habermas explains that solidarity represents the social bond which “unites all persons” such that “one person stands in for the other”. Justice demands that the differences which demarcate one individual from another must be respected – “respect him in his otherness” (1998a:10). Within our

everyday communications, “empathy” and “concern” ensure the reciprocal relations necessary for solidarity, while “equal respect” and “equal rights” generate the symmetrical relations necessary for justice (1998a:35).

Habermas’ discourse ethics accounts for the internal connection between solidarity and justice (1990:200). Two conditions describe this internal connection. Regarding solidarity, discursive agreements must overcome egocentrism. Concerning justice, discourse requires each participant to take a ‘yes/no’ position on a contested validity claim. These conditions are met when the pragmatic presuppositions (“features”) of argumentation facilitate consensus formation. Within argumentation, everyone’s interest(s) will be considered while also maintaining the existing social bond uniting everyone (1998a:35). The interconnection between solidarity and justice presents communicative intersubjectivity as a democratic relational dynamic. The dynamic applies to both moral-practical (the right) discourse and ethical-existential/ethical-political (the good) discourse.

Furthermore, both solidarity and justice have the “same root”: human vulnerability issuing from socialized individuation (1990:200). On the one hand, our vulnerability (e.g., intersubjective dependence) originates within our everyday communicative practices. On the other hand, discourse (e.g., moral-practical) is a resource for addressing and resolving our vulnerability (1990:221). Moral-practical discourse must therefore protect solidarity and justice simultaneously: “It [morality] cannot protect the rights of the individual without also protecting the well-being of the community to which he belongs” (1990:200, also 202). The demanding presuppositions (e.g., complete inclusion, equal opportunity to participate, non-coercive, openness to better argument) which underlay both communicative action and discourse ensure that all individual interests are fully respected and considered. At the same time, they promise that existing social bonds are maintained (2003d:105). Everyone is both autonomous and embedded. Argumentation, a procedure of discursive decision making, interconnects autonomous ‘yes/no’ decisions with “empathetic sensitivity” towards the uniqueness of each participant (1990:202).

Habermas points out that each person acquires her basic moral intuition, to a certain extent, from her family experiences, “by growing up in a family regulated by [non-distorted] communicative actions”. All communicative practices, within “all forms of socio-cultural life”, engender an “elemental normativity”. For instance, we learn to respect each other’s differences, to treat each other as equals and to empathize with each other’s vulnerability within our families and our friendships. He even suggests that the employment of normative presuppositions within everyday communicative practices can be referred to as “a kind of ‘natural law’” (1999:448). Clearly, solidarity involves empathy and concern for others’ well-being. And, empathy and concern can also be understood as prerequisites for solidarity. It is in family that responsibility, empathy and concern for others are first cultivated. And, it is in family that these experiences first generate and flesh out our life-histories, our identities.

We learn the moral fabric of life, Habermas contends, within “reasonably functional” “normal” families (1993:114; 1997:86): “we learn it [morality] on our own if we grow up under halfway healthy conditions. The moral point of view is already contained in the structures of simple communicative actions in which we recognize each other as persons who are accountable and simultaneously vulnerable, and who need protection” (1997:73). Patterns of “mutual recognition” imbue our everyday communicative sociations. While we are intuitively aware of structures of mutual recognition within “concrete personal relationships” such as family, it is not immediately apparent how they can effectively establish consensus within “abstract relationships between strangers”. Habermas contends that law transmits these structures to a higher level of intersubjectivity (1997:73). Indeed, some form of legal mediation will be needed if these structures are to be productive at the level of cosmopolitan relationships.

Habermas’ claim regarding the functionality of family, admittedly, does not “sit well with the spirit of the times” (1993:114). He does little to specify the implications for solidarity of his use of the terms “normal” or “functional”. Yet there is no reason to believe his analytic position involves rigid patriarchal or paternalistic

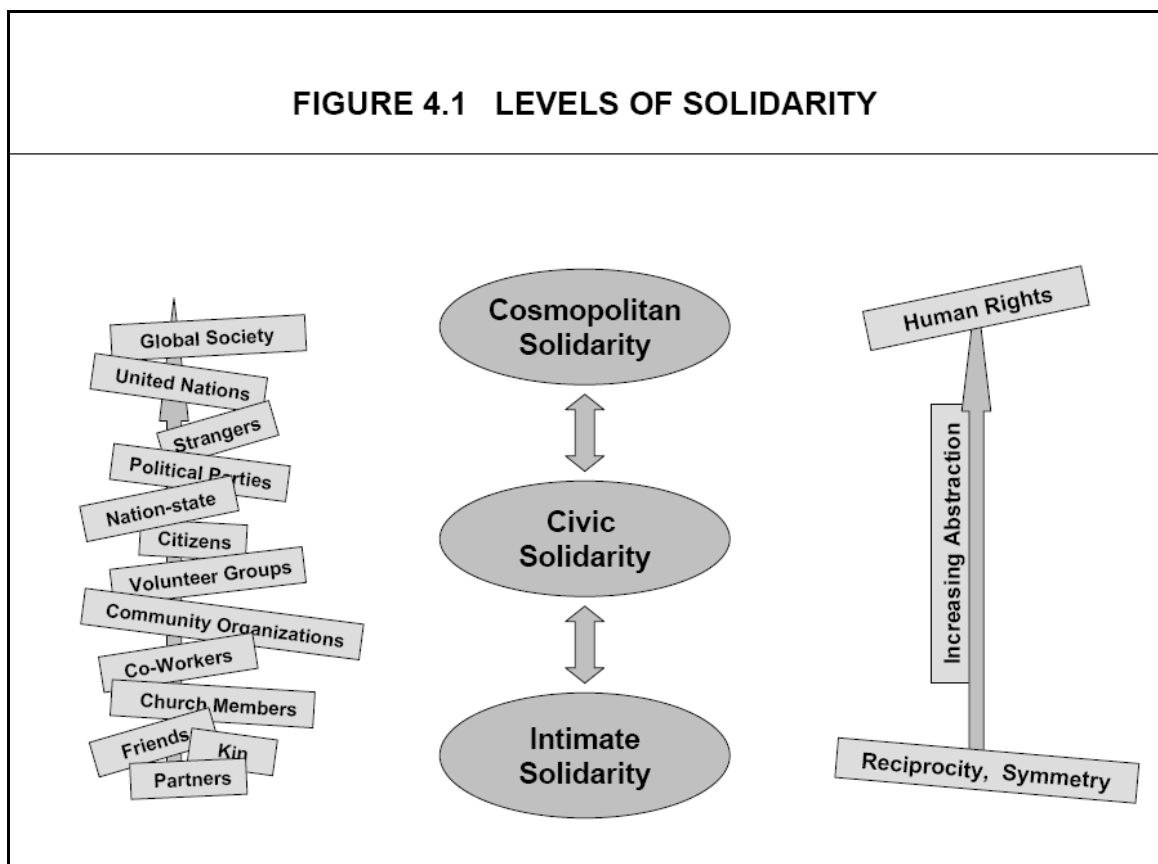
assumptions, especially considering the reciprocal nature of justice and solidarity (1990:200) and the ideal nature of the normative conditions for communicative action and discourse. Individuals are autonomous and embedded, at once. As autonomous agents, they are free to take yes/no positions. And, as embedded agents, they must employ “empathetic sensitivity” in order to arrive at a consensual agreement (1990:202).

Yet another Habermasian explanation of solidarity is proffered in his discussion of an ideal communication community. In an ideal communication community there is “a consciousness of irrevocable solidarity, the certainty of intimate relatedness in a shared life context” (1989-90:48). The terms “irrevocable” and “certainty” stand out in stark relief. Although linked to an ideal situation, they express a powerful sense of oneness within lifeworld settings. The importance and centrality of solidary relations within everyday life is reinforced through Habermas’ use of phrases such as “intimate relatedness” and “shared life context”, both of which connote the concrete everyday experience of family.

Finally, Habermas also distinguishes “legally mediated” or “artificial” solidarity from “natural solidarity”. Legally mediated solidarity is artificial because it is produced by law. The bonds devolve from citizenship status (e.g., rights). Citizens “take responsibility for each other” while also remaining strangers at the same time. This artificial binding power must be able to *replace* a “pre-political” or “natural” solidarity historically characteristic of ties to “village communities and religious congregations, corporations and guilds”. A constitutionally grounded and legally mediated solidarity exists between citizens only, and not between the state and citizens as is reflected in natural solidarity. The state acquires its political relevance because “citizens can develop opinions and choose between programs but cannot themselves act politically and transform programs into reality” (2000b:524).

Habermas differentiates three general levels of solidarity (see Figure 4.1): intimate, civic and cosmopolitan. Central to all three is the idea that each member within a community stands up for every other member. (a) Intimate solidarity involves intense bonds within personal relationships that are typical of private life-

experience. Habermas does not use the phrase ‘intimate solidarity’. The catchphrase is used here to represent the bonds of oneness experienced within core areas of lifeworld’s private sphere. In this sense, *intimacy* is not limited simply to feelings or emotions (e.g., lovers). Within the private sphere, the social world of members consists of thick webs of “intentions”, “practices” and “beliefs” (1998a:38), which social actors implicitly rely upon in their everyday communicative action. Even within these “simple” interactions, mutual recognition and respect are necessary for solidary relations. In one reference to these contexts, Habermas suggests that solidarity is “quasi-natural” (1996b:318).



A wide range of private life-experiences, including family, friendships, acquaintances, neighbors, and co-workers, can be characterized as involving thick discursive patterns of interaction (1992a:434). However, the first two (family, friendships) reflect stronger and denser forms of contact (1996b:365). For example,

intense attachment to particular value orientations and to established normative patterns often leads individuals to hold “strong evaluations” about their way of life (1998a:32). Strong evaluations create boundary conditions for discourse – “competing conceptions” of how we see ourselves and how we want to organize our activities (1998a:39). At this level, solidarity is tied to a particular collective or a shared way of life. Habermas captures the limited nature of intimate solidarity in one rather revealing phrase. He describes it as “ethnocentrically isolated” (1989-90:47). Over time, Habermas states, the “archaic bonding energies” (e.g., self-sacrifice for the collective) within family, or kin, have been “refined” so that solidarity wears a human face and not just a kinship face, suggesting all human beings are equal (1989-90:48-49).

(b) Civic solidarity, characteristic of nation-states, is more abstract and “rooted in particular collective identities” (2001c:108). Within complex societies, solidarity can be reproduced only through “communicative practices of self-determination”. At this level, solidarity has to be “abstract” and “legally mediated” through citizenship rights (1996b:445). For example, solidarity between strangers can develop from the discursive resolution (“communicative mastery”) of society-wide conflicts (1996b:308). Civic solidarity is discursively generated within a “politically constituted context” shaped by the same “demanding preconditions” (1998a:160) of moral-practical argumentation.

For civic solidarity to monitor and moderate the functionally integrating forces of money and power, it must draw its strength from sources beyond (but including) everyday communicative action. Solidarity is derived from “autonomous public spheres” and from “legally institutionalized procedures of democratic deliberation and decision making” (1998a:249). Habermas contends that the basic structures of mutual recognition which inhere our “simple” communicative interactions (e.g., intimate solidarity) are “transferred” to the more abstract levels of organizational relationships through the medium of “legal communication” (1996b:437). Law both “stabilizes behavioral expectations” and establishes “symmetrical relationships of reciprocal recognition” at the same time. Law functions to establish solidaric

relations “indirectly”, at a more abstract level than relationships within everyday interactions (1996b:449). Civic solidarity is “the cement” which unites national societies (2001d:16).

And, finally, (c) cosmopolitan solidarity is “weaker”, “less binding” and even more “abstract” than civic solidarity (2001c:56, 64, 108). Cosmopolitan solidarity rests “in the first instance” on indignation over human rights violations. At this level, it is a form of “cosmopolitan cohesion” based on reaction(s) to injustice, to oppression, to the abuse of human rights. Civic solidarity is less intense than the bonding associated with traditional kin networks, and family in particular. As we move from intimate to civic to cosmopolitan solidarity, the characteristic thickness of social actors’ “communicative embeddedness” tends to contract. Whereas the “normative model” of a moral community is the “universe of all moral persons”, the “normative framework” of a cosmopolitan community comprises human rights: “legal norms with an exclusive moral content”. The underlying principle is “complete inclusion”. A political community which is democratically self-determined must be inclusive (2001c:107-109). On the basis of the universal inclusion standard for a democratic community, existing requisite resources (e.g., cosmopolitan public sphere) for responding to globalized capitalism do not yet exist.

Cosmopolitan solidarity is a necessary but not yet present resource for controlling global networks of power and markets. Habermas argues that we need “a form of self-referential politics” which could foster democratic political action and reign in an “uncontrolled economic dynamic” (2002b:153). Globalization has meant that nation-states have been losing their ability to address threats politically and to establish stable collective identities. Consequently, self-legitimation problems arise (2001c:80). A self-referential politics, with human rights and rights to political participation at its core, could “enable democratically united citizens to shape their own status legislatively”. At any political level, legitimacy requires a “fair distribution” of rights and an active citizenship which uses them. Active use of rights becomes a source of solidarity for political action (2001c:76-77). In order for politics to “catch up to globalized markets” it has to have the appropriate institutional orders

(2001c:94), functionally equivalent to an institutional form within a democratic state: legislative body, political public sphere.

Under current socio-political conditions in western nation-states, citizens must “pressure global actors”, including governments, “social movements, non-governmental organizations”, and “active members of civil society”, to understand themselves “as members of an international community” who must cooperate together to resolve global issues (e.g., political oppression) (2001c:55-56). The problem of realizing social justice within global society requires a democratic political solution. Habermas understands the shifting dynamic of solidaric relations as a historical learning process characterized by increasingly abstract forms of self-consciousness: “from local, to dynastic, to nation to democratic”. He contends that we are at the stage where a further abstraction – a cosmopolitan consciousness capable of generating a cosmopolitan solidarity – is necessary (2001c:56, 102). Based on past learning experience (e.g., changing forms of consciousness) he believes a cosmopolitan consciousness is possible: “why should this learning process not continue?” (2003c:98; also 2001c:56, 102)

On the one hand, Habermas believes this learning process *should* (and can) continue. On the other hand he struggles with lingering doubt about a cosmopolitan political project:

A more peaceful and just political and economic world order is unthinkable without international institutions that are capable of taking initiatives, and above all without a harmonization between the continental regimes that are today just emerging, and without the kind of policies that could only be carried out under pressure from a mobilized global civil society. (1998a:127)

The “troubling question”, he contends, is “whether democratic opinion- and will-formation could ever achieve a binding force beyond the level of the nation-state” (1998a:127). To create a “just” and “peaceful” world social and economic order requires that a proactive “worldwide mobile civil society” exert pressure through appropriate legitimate, democratic and global decision making institutions (1997:178-179). Without a legitimate democratic political framework through which

global domestic policy and programs can develop and be enacted, we run the risk of desolidarization.

Has globalization “disconnected” the lines of communication necessary for radical democratic impulses to balance lifeworld-system resources? For Habermas, the modern global social dynamic involves a different “coordinate system” (1994b:79) than is represented by an isolated nation-state independently addressing its problems. Understanding the new coordinate system in terms of state-economy-society no longer captures the realities of the postnational constellation and of globalization. The new dynamic is better understood as world domestic policy, global economic networks and global society. Habermas identifies three consequences of ineffective national political policies and programs: higher unemployment rates; increasing pressure to “dismantle the welfare state”; and, the presence of an “underclass” of people who become “cut off” from society (1997:179-180).

As the welfare-state compromise itself becomes compromised, crisis tendencies emerge which “threaten to overburden the integration capacities of liberal societies”. When citizens are excluded from education, employment and welfare compensations, underclasses develop. Segmented groups – “[i]mpoverished social groups, largely cordoned off from the broader society” – will be unable to “improve their social position through their own efforts”. Since they are unable to make use of their rights as citizens, they become voiceless. These segmented groups have no influence upon, nor are they a threat to, the established social order. As democratic societies lose their “universalistic self-understanding”, the legitimacy of decision making procedures and of political institutions becomes challenged. The danger is that loss of solidarity, or desolidarization, can “destroy a liberal political culture” (2001c:50-51). A similar solidaristic deficit exists between the Third World and the First – powerlessness. Whose voices are determining global (and national) economic and political policy and programming?

Habermas recognizes three “inevitable” problems arising from segmented political communities: (a) “social tensions” arising from uprisings and revolts which

are repressed and the “growth industry” associated with internal security; (b) generalization of “social neglect and physical misery” to all sectors of society; and (c) “moral erosion of society” (1997:180). When groups or segments of society are excluded from processes of discursive opinion formation and democratic decision making, the legitimacy of the procedures and the results are undermined. All three problems are sober reminders of the “limits of the nation-state” (1997:180). A society’s capacity for moral problem solving is dependent upon the inclusiveness of its practices.

The problem of desolidarization reflects the limited capacities of the nation state to deal with highly abstractive problems. When the basic presuppositions of argumentation are not sufficiently fulfilled, solidarity becomes a scarce resource. Occidentalism, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, imperialism and even administrative paternalism can also restrict solidaristic energies. Discursive and democratic practices depend upon a universalistic egalitarianism of equal respect and mutual responsibility. For solidarity to be an effective resource for balancing the lifeworld-system interchange, the “legacy of the nation-state” must be carried on at higher levels of social complexity, at the European level to begin with, Habermas argues, but especially within global society (1997:181). The appropriate normative resources (e.g., global public sphere) need to be cultivated at different levels.

Habermas describes social modernization, of which the development of the nation-state and economic globalization are an integral part, as steps “along the road to abstraction” (1997:169). His lifeworld-system interchange model and the model of boundary conflicts, and his discourse theory of democracy, indicate that an “unprecedented increase in abstraction” is currently underway (e.g., globalized economic markets) (1998a:107). The question that concerns Habermas is whether we will be able to learn from these abstractive processes. His focus on the political public sphere reflects his concern with the public use of reason in processes of self-realization and self-determination. If we are to live together peacefully and cooperatively, then reason’s voice must be inclusive and rational. Leaving the problems confronting the nation-state unaddressed, will exact an extreme “price” –

“the coin of growing social inequities”. Based on the “standards of civility” repositied within our developed forms of life, the cost is much “too high” (2001a:xviii-xix “Forward”).

4.2.6 COMMENTS

The complexities of modern life have necessitated the development of action-coordinating and problem-solving practices which are both inclusive and legitimate. The modern nation-state made it possible for a more abstract form of social integration, beyond the bonds created by common “ancestry and dialect”. One key accomplishment of the nation-state was its ability to expand “the parameters” for implementing “human rights and democracy”. A new mode of legally mediated solidarity was able to bring strangers together, as co-equals. Traditionally “inherited loyalties” (e.g., “village”, “clan”, “landscape”, “dynasty”) became reformulated universalistically. Habermas believes we are now confronted with the need for another “abstractive step”. Nation-states no longer provide an appropriate framework for socially integrating societal members (2001c:18-19).

The problems associated with globalization require postnational forms of “democratic self-steering” appropriate for a global community. Habermas uses the developing European Union as a model, or “exemplary case”, to demonstrate the necessary conditions for a postnational “democratic politics”. “[C]ollective identities”, Habermas states, “are made, not found” (2001c:18-19). We have to develop the normative framework capable of generating cosmopolitan solidaric relationships. The traditional understanding of popular sovereignty – “the rights of communication and participation that secure the public autonomy of politically enfranchised citizens” – as a mode of legitimation for political authority of the nation-state must be extended, globally (1994b:165).

As a starting point, Habermas believes we should establish more complex transnational relationships and democratize extant political institutions. He is not speaking of a world government, but he is abstracting beyond existing institutional complexes:

Only if the forces of democratic constitutional states can be bound together into larger political unities such as a European Union; only if regional, effective conferences and alliances can be created between states; only if the United Nations can be transformed from a resolutionary to an acting committee – only then does the chance still exist that citizens can, in full consciousness and with their own will, assume influence upon the development of worldwide systemic operations through their own political public spheres and their own democratic conduct. (1994b:165)

Appropriately, Habermas does not believe the economic subsystem should be left to self-regulate its own abstractive development. Only transnational political institutions which have the power to act through democratic legitimation and are open to influence by “a worldwide, mobile civil society” can bring about a “peaceful” and “just” “world order” (1997:177-179).

Concerning the need for a distributional balance of lifeworld-system resources (solidarity, money, power), Habermas envisions the potential for extending a radical form of democracy into the global social arena. A cosmopolitan form of radical democracy hinges on whether lifeworld communicative energies become (“centrifugally”) “lost in global villages” or whether they become nurtured within global political public spheres, spheres which have yet to be formally established. Public spaces must be available for individuals to discuss issues and problems about “the same subjects” at the “same [level of] relevance”. Nation-states used this kind of discursive practice to establish a “new network of solidarity” which empowered the state to redress, to some extent, the abstractive tendencies of social modernization. Since this “drive to abstraction” continues, Habermas appropriately asks whether an expanding lifeworld centered public consciousness is “still capable” of effective political communication (1997:177).

Only by moralizing issues and problems on the basis of a discursive universalization of interests within public debate, will everyone begin to assess and redress the shared risks we all face (e.g., global ecological degradation). The voice of reason must be heard globally. Recognizing that everyone’s interests are intimately interconnected is fundamentally important. Both moral and ethical viewpoints cultivate an openness to “the far-reaching, and simultaneously less

insistent and more fragile, ties that bind the fate of one individual to that of every other". In order to resolve societal or global problems, each person must understand every other person to be a member of her community (1991c:38-39). The next section (4.3) will look at the emancipatory potential within family.

4.3 SOCIAL CHANGE AND FAMILY

4.3.1. INTRODUCTION

Habermas uses his lifeworld-system interchange model as a backdrop to assess the implications for establishing non-oppressive forms of life. Ongoing structural change within family is a critical social space which, unfortunately, he discusses only sporadically and unsystematically. In this section, Habermas' understanding of social change and family will be summarized under three themes: the historical development of family (4.4.2); the promise and paradox of an emancipated family form (4.4.3); and communicative practices within familial contexts (4.4.4). The first two sections are based primarily on Habermas' work on the public sphere (1991b; 1992a). The last section utilizes his views on distorted communication (2001b). Using Habermas' theoretical insights, the chapter will conclude with an analysis of recent statistical data on Canadian families in order to gain a better understanding of the potential for an emancipated family form.

4.3.2. FAMILY HISTORY

Habermas describes the historical development of family, from the eighteenth century on, in terms of the progressive dissociation of the bourgeois patriarchal conjugal family from processes of production (e.g., employment) and social reproduction (e.g., politics) (1991b:151ff). As the realm of family became differentiated from economic and social reproduction, it lost a number of its traditional functions: its "productive" function as a "community of production" (1991b: 154); its "protective" function as a source of security in "cases of emergency" (e.g., loss of wages) and of "self-provision for old-age" (1991b:155,157); its "socialization" function or its "power as an agent of personal internalization" (1991b:156); its function for life-management, such as care-giving, education, guidance (1991b:155); its function as a transmitter of "elementary

tradition and frameworks of orientation" (1991b:157); and its function as an "audience-oriented intimate sphere" within which rational critical debate occurs (e.g., conversation in the salon or family room) (1991b:157ff).

The loss of these functions had profound implications for everyday life including: replacement of family property with an increasing dependence on wages and salaries for income (1991b:155); transformation of familial responsibility for life (e.g., sickness, unemployment) into expanded welfare state "guarantees" such as "income supplements", "health maintenance", and "occupational and educational counseling" (1991b:155); institutionalization of education, care, protection (life managing functions) by formally organized and state supported systems of action (1991b:155); and transfiguration of the privatized intimate sphere of "bourgeois forms of sociability" (centered in a familial reading and debating public) into a sphere of privacy and interiority (e.g., a sphere of "informal opinions of private citizens without a public", "a sphere of cultural consumption", and a sphere of "hollowed out" "interiority") (1991b:162,156,247). Regarding responsibility for life-risks, welfare state guarantees, which were directed at individual family members, increasingly assumed the nature of intrusive "preventative measures" (1991b:155). Family, as Habermas suggests, has turned outside-in, or in on itself.

Concurrent with these functional losses, family retreated into itself, into "a sphere of pseudo-privacy" (1991b:157,154). Furthermore, "bourgeois ideals penetrated private spheres of life" creating individualized and highly "intensified family relations", relations characterized by "love", "friendship" and emotion or "feelings" (1987c:329). Family became a social location where "'purely human'" relations could develop (1991b:46,48). The intensified and interiorized privacy, concretized in the conjugal family form, was, however, an "illusion" (1991b:156,47). Understood as a voluntary relationship, a community of love and a (non-instrumental) social space for cultivating personalities (1991b:46-47; also 1987c:329), the bourgeois family was assumed to be independent of the larger society, and, in particular, of the economy.

Family did gain a certain autonomy as it became disconnected from "social labour and commodity exchange" (1991b:46). However, Habermas argues that the perceived autonomy and independence was a facade which only provided an "ideological guarantee" or social legitimation for the presumed justness of the economic rationality of the market place (1991b:46). The ("real") central purpose of the privatized family was to reproduce labour, both genealogically and socially. Both of these responsibilities were necessary for the "reproduction of capital" (1991b:47). In effect, "private autonomy [was] denying its economic origins" (1991b:46, 55), and therefore the significance of its reproductive capacities. Habermas contends that this hollowing out process has continued unfettered during the twentieth century. The apparent private autonomy of contemporary families is incessantly drawn into the vortex of consumption or consumerism and 'clientism' (1991b:156).

With these losses in function, family has increasingly "lost its power to shape conduct in areas considered the innermost provinces of privacy by the bourgeois family" (1991b:155). Family is now a "consumer of income and leisure time" and a "recipient of publicly guaranteed compensations and support services" (1991b:155,156). In large measure, "[p]rivate autonomy" has come to mean the "power to enjoy" rather than the "power to dispose" inherent within commodity ownership. Functions, formerly privately controlled within family – "capital formation", "upbringing", "education", "protection", "care", "guidance" (as noted above), have been replaced by "status guarantees" organized in a framework of client-state rights and obligations (1991b:155, 156). Family has been hollowed out. Of these changes Habermas writes: "[t]he shrinking of the private sphere into the inner areas of a conjugal family largely relieved of function and weakened in authority – the quiet bliss of homeyness – provided only the illusion of a perfectly private personal space" (1991b:159).

The hollowing out of family and the ensuing contradiction between the bourgeois family's assumed privacy and its real functions (procreation and social reproduction) is demonstrated in the lifeworld-system interchange of labour for

wages. Since employment has been separated from the familial domain, wages and salaries now comprise the primary means by which families provide for themselves in a market economy. Survival needs (e.g., material, social and psychological) necessitate participation in the labour market in exchange for money, which in turn is exchanged for the appropriate goods and services on the basis of market tailored needs and preferences. These survival imperatives are, as often as not, controlled by external economic interests (e.g., profit) which define and direct consumer interests and needs (1991b:155,156). There have been two major effects of the hollowing out process of the private sphere: family is no longer viewed as "the primary agency of society" (1991b:156, 157); and, the survival activities of family members are structured by a dual dependency structure – dependence upon wages and salaries, and reliance upon welfare state compensations to relieve the burdens of systemic problems (e.g., employment insurance).

Habermas sees familial relationships as having been continuously and progressively transformed. Largely relieved of its productive capacity, family members now exchange their labour power for wages which are in turn exchanged for goods and services. As well, private households have become centers of mass consumption (1987c:351). And, state guarantees against the vicissitudes of life through client based services draw private life under political power. Herein lies the paradox for family interaction. On the one hand, the contemporary nuclear family is experiencing autonomous and expanded opportunities for a consensual and cooperative determination of life-experiences (1987c:387,403, also 145). On the other hand, an intensified monetarization and bureaucratization process is reaching into family (1987c:386,322) and converting social (discursive) action over to functional requisites. After all, systems do view everything as part of their environment, including individuals and their needs and goals.

4.3.3 THE PROMISE AND THE PARADOX OF EMANCIPATION

As discussed above, Habermas argues that the bourgeois family has undergone "epochal changes" (1987c:387). Although he was emphasizing recent historical transformations of family function and structure, his assessment is still

appropriate today. A major impetus for these changes has been the profound effect "exchange relationships" have had upon "personal relations" within family (1991b:155). Habermas believes that the economic subsystem – "a self-referentially sealed economic system whose self-stabilization requires the absorption and the processing of all relevant information solely in the business management language of cost effectiveness" – has become the "pacemaker" of social evolution (1994b:117). A power driven (political) administrative system is not at the same remove from everyday life as the economic system, because within democratic states administrative power must be legitimated (e.g., elections).

The problem, as Habermas sees it, is that intensified and expanded networks of "communication and commerce" establish "a new [social] infrastructure" (e.g., globalized networks) without there being "a new consciousness" (2002b:149) for dealing with structural changes of a postnational nature. There is as yet no cosmopolitan solidarity or world public sphere through which a new cosmopolitan consciousness could take shape. Social modernity's normative self-understanding continues to lag behind (2001c:55, 56, 102). The underlying concern here is two fold. Within Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange, what does lifeworld rationalization mean for (emancipated) familial relationships? And, what contribution(s) does, or can, family make to emancipatory impulses within larger societal and global processes of social change? This research addresses the first question directly, while indirectly pointing towards the second.

The implications for social interaction in familial contexts can be characterized, at once, as liberating and constraining, or emancipatory and non-emancipatory. A passage which captures the essence of this dilemma is found at the conclusion of the second volume of Habermas' *The Theory of Communicative Action*, where he writes:

In modern societies there is such an expansion of the scope of contingency for interaction loosed from normative contexts that the inner logic of communicative action 'becomes practically true' in the deinstitutionalized forms of intercourse of the familial private sphere as well as in a public sphere stamped by the mass media. At the same time, the systemic imperatives of autonomous subsystems

penetrate into the lifeworld and, through monetarization and bureaucratization, force an assimilation of communicative action to formally organized domains of action - even in areas where the action-coordinating mechanism of reaching understanding is functionally necessary. (1987c:403)

Having already discussed the public sphere, this section is concerned with what Habermas means by the inner logic of communicative action becoming “practically true” within family.

As the quotation indicates, the (a) promise and (b) paradox of more democratic and autonomous experiences resonate within familial interaction. In practical terms, everyday actions are organized and guided both by a democratically oriented process of reaching agreement and by systemic imperatives such as waged employment (1987a:349, 355). Some of the implications for family and family change are presented below.

(a) The Promise. Habermas contends that the emancipatory impulse inhering lifeworld rationalization creates opportunities for "egalitarian patterns of relationship" (1987c:387). Family members, as social actors, engage in a circular learning process in which each person becomes both an "*initiator*" of social action and a "*product*" of her/his particular cultural traditions, group solidarities and socialization processes (1985c:167; 1987c:135; 1991a:224). This process has significant implications for interpersonal relationships: in particular, for the development of a more egalitarian playing field for social action. For wives the result should be more economic independence and opportunity, more financial resources and an equitable (preferably equal) sharing of familial responsibilities. For husbands the outcome should be less patriarchal authority, more cooperatively based interaction and more involvement in and responsibility for family concerns and needs such as childcare and household labour. Further, since family's primary function now focuses especially on socialization (but also need fulfilment and identity formation), significant opportunity for the intergenerational transmission of emancipatory impulses imbues this communicative process (1987c:138; 387ff; 2001b:160). As participants in social action communicatively and consensually

strive to develop, organize and coordinate new plans of action, the social tapestry of family life becomes richer, that is, more autonomous, democratic and egalitarian.

For instance, when a wife-mother re-enters the labour market, shifts in family life-circumstances generally follow. Responsibility for childcare and other household labour, time available for family and personal needs and concerns, and the organization of household and leisure activities may need to be renegotiated. Ideally, employed wives and husbands will make decisions consensually, organize their life-plans cooperatively and coordinate their actions. Of course, they do so within particular familial contexts (e.g., a dual-earner family), while drawing upon pre-formed lifeworld resources such as personal abilities and competencies, and guided by religious and cultural-political provincialities. Each action context brings the promise of new understandings which can form the basis for developing new cultural strategies and meanings, new solidarities and dependencies, and new competencies and motivations. Or, conversely, the existing status quo may simply be maintained and reinforced.

The implication is that abilities (competencies), expectations (norms) and solidarities, and meanings (values) are in a potential state of flux. The hope is that there is an emancipatory telos undergirding this flux. Over time, lifeworld realities and resources change. New patterns of behaviour, new relational dependencies and new expectations become concretized. Conceptions of gender-appropriate behaviour shift. Individual competencies and abilities develop which equip women and men for wider, more varied and more egalitarian forms of social experience. From this perspective, an emancipatory potential inheres everyday communicative practices within family (1987c:387, 403). There is some promise for egalitarian relationships.

(b) The Paradox. Familial interaction is not simply dialogically determined on the basis of consensus. This may be what Habermas has in mind when he suggests that "[m]acrosociological power relations are mirrored in [the] microphysics of power which is built into the structures of distorted communication" (1991a:247). There are very few (if any) familial contexts in which decision-making processes and

the coordination of action plans are not directly determined or indirectly influenced by systemic imperatives (monetarization, bureaucratization), by patriarchal assumptions (e.g., wife-caregiver and husband-provider), or by ego-centric power relationships. Power differentials, inadequate need satisfaction and interactive conflicts are all threats to family “cohesiveness” (solidarity) (2001b:165).

Monetarization, for example, tends to organize and determine action consequences quite apart from reaching understanding consensually. Family and personal life-goals, personal relationships and responsibilities have all become redefined and reorganized monetarily (1987c:322, 395). For instance, employees must adapt to organizational requirements which are beyond their control. Participation in formally organized institutions creates lifeworld limitations. Obviously, time spent in employment is not time spent in family. A significant part of everyday experience is assimilated by functional demands and needs (e.g., length of workday, location of employment, type of employment). Under normal circumstances, the implications of organizational commitments (e.g., membership obligations) are seldom subject to a critical examination.

When problems arise, role conflicts for instance, the controlling nature of membership obligations for everyday communicative contexts become apparent. Spouses must choose between weekend family time and overtime at the office. Employed parents must take time off in order to care for a sick child. Within family, functional imperatives constantly insinuate their way into the performance of daily activities and the provision of daily needs. One common feature of contemporary family life is the trend toward *outservicing*. More and more, the marketplace supplies goods and services historically provided in the home: restaurant meals, daycare, automobile maintenance. Another trend is *inservicing*: washing machines, housekeeping services, home care.

Habermas asserts that the economy tends to erode and undermine the private sphere of the lifeworld. Functional imperatives, it seems, are never far from everyday communicative processes. The behavior of family members, for example, becomes patterned by "consumerism", "performance" and "competition". Under the

force of functional imperatives, the intersubjectivity of everyday communicative practices oriented toward achieving consensus assumes hedonistic forms and effects (1987c:325). Functional imperatives require strategic interaction – action which is “oriented toward the consequences of decisions” made according to self-interest or personal preference (1998d:425). Decisions and actions do not need to be justified through consensus. Thus, the monetarization (and bureaucratization) of everyday action tends to restrict the emancipatory impulse outlined above. Therein lies the paradox. The next section will examine Habermas’ understanding of communication and family.

4.3.4 COMMUNICATION AND FAMILY

A basic premise underlying this analysis is that a Habermasian perspective of family holds significant potential for explicating the contemporary realities of family life, especially the promise of egalitarianism. However, articulating such an approach to family and family change is complicated by the notable absence of any systematic study of family in Habermas’ oeuvre. One exception is a treatise on communicative pathology written over thirty years ago (2001b:129-171). Still, he continues to view his “suggestions” in that work as “relevant” (1993:148-149). A number of his suggestions will be discussed here in relation to the potential for developing a non-distorted or emancipatory familial form.

The world-historical process of lifeworld rationalization has released “a potential for reason” within our everyday communicative practices (1985a:101). Specifically, communicative actions oriented toward reaching understanding have both “emancipating” and “unburdening” effects for everyday life (2001c:156). Traditional, normative patterns of interaction have become subject to the “interpretive accomplishments” of social actors who now have the capacity to develop new ways of doing things, new solidarities, and new motivations (2001d:154). Our communicative practices have a productive force (2001c:154). As old relationships dissolve they can be replaced by new bonds of solidarity (e.g., remarriage).

In order for participants to be oriented toward reaching consensus, they must accept certain assumptions about their conversation: for example, inclusion of everyone, equal consideration of all contributions, freedom from coercion, openness to the better argument. Pragmatic presuppositions of rationality facilitate reaching consensus based on the best reasons (1993:31). While these presuppositions are more visible and “accessible” within argumentation, they are common to all forms of communicative action (2002b:83), even within family. The brief overview which follows is based upon Habermas’ analysis of communicative pathologies. Since communicative pathologies are not a direct concern of this research, only the broad features of family life will be outlined.

Communicative sociation – family members’ ability to cooperatively plan their lives and coordinate their discursive interactions – requires interactive competence. Individuals must participate in and continue reaching consensus even during conflicts, regardless of the validity basis of the disagreement (e.g., truth, rightness, sincerity). Family members’ capacity for maintaining discourse, as opposed to quitting or simply appearing to continue, is the standard measure for interactive competence (2001b:135-136). Communicative competence also regulates motivational development or “internal behavior controls” in two ways. First, socialization occurs within the medium of communicative action: “the influence of familial environments are filtered and transmitted to the personality system”. Second, wants and needs are interpreted and organized through our communicative practices (2001b:131).

In family, as in most life-circumstances, normal everyday conversation occurs within a “gray area” where consensus must be “actively” sought. Mutual understanding – the telos of ordinary language – moves participants beyond problems concerning misunderstanding, disagreement or insincerity. Successful practices of reaching understanding depend upon the “reciprocal recognition” of the participants towards each other. They also depend upon whether all participants are committed to reaching agreement based on the better argument (2001b:136, 137) or whether all contributions are equally considered. How else would a

(democratic) family project work if not by the consensual basis of communicative action?

Habermas points out that the ability to say “no” is a staging point for reciprocally engaging in interpersonal relationships. Only with her ‘no’ does a child understand that “orders, prohibitions, or offers” are claims (“requests”) which can be rejected (“denied”). Orders are not orders, prohibitions are not prohibitions, and offers are not offers until the person(s) being addressed has the “conscious ability to say no” (2001b:139, 140). Autonomous and responsible discursive action begins with this linguistic and interactive accomplishment. It represents the rational (reasoned) basis for cooperative projects such as family.

Distorted communication occurs when the pragmatic “universal presuppositions” of communication are violated. Within his analysis of communicative pathologies, Habermas identifies two presuppositions: mutual accountability, and readiness and willingness to reach understanding. An accountable participant is one who has “overcome childish egocentrism”. And, a participant who is ready and willing to reach agreement must also attribute this same “disposition” to all other participants (2001b:147-148). The description of these two presuppositions mirrors Habermas’ discussion of justice and solidarity. In that case, one explanation he has provided refers to overcoming egocentrism (e.g., solidarity) and individual ‘yes/no’ responses (e.g., justice) as “conditions” leading to a “discursive agreement” (1998a:35). On the one hand, an agreement depends on both conditions being met simultaneously. On the other hand, a rationally motivated decision can account for individual interests and can keep prior social bonds intact. These requisite conditions for argumentation preserve the internal relation between justice and solidarity. They also reflect the essential assumptions of Habermas’ discourse ethical understanding of “egalitarian universalism”, equal respect (justice) and solidaristic responsibility (solidarity), the presuppositions necessary for the moral point of view (1998a:35,39,40). Accountability and readiness to reach understanding, the essence of justice and solidarity and of the moral point of view, are first practiced and learned within family.

Social individuation therefore generates identities which are capable of autonomous action while remaining sensitive to solidary embeddedness.

Distorted communication occurs only when the transcendental pragmatic presuppositions underlying argumentation are violated (e.g., accountability, willingness/readiness to reach understanding) (2001b:147). Systematic distortion occurs when the “validity basis of speech is curtailed surreptitiously” while communication continues under the assumption of communicative action. Participants maintain communication furtively and do not shift to “openly declared and permissible strategic action”. Habermas explains that the violation of the communicative presuppositions does not become “manifest”: “it is not recognized and admitted by the participants”. Because conflict is neither manifest nor totally suppressed, it smolders within everyday interactions, thereby “distorting communications” (2001b:154, 155).. He points out that,

On the one hand, the structure of communication is deformed under the pressure of conflicts that are not carried out because the validity basis of speech is damaged. On the other hand, and simultaneously, this deformed structure stabilizes a context of action that, although charged with the potential for conflict, constrains and to some extent immobilizes that potential. (2001b:155).

As conflict smolders, as communicative presuppositions continue to be violated but not resolved, communications become distorted.

Habermas describes systematically distorted communication as the disruption of the “internal organization” of speech by its “external organization”. The internal organization refers to the “universal pragmatic regulation of sequences of speech acts” – presuppositions that do not need to be backed up by social norms. With lifeworld rationalization, and the dissolution of a traditional normatively ascribed background consensus, reaching understanding has become more complex. Through a process of “double-sided differentiation”, speech became separated from values and norms, on the one hand, and from subjectivity, on the other. Detaching speech from normative background and from identity means that an existing and shared understanding “no longer guarantees agreement”. Dissensus leads to contested claims which must be renegotiated (2001b:144-145).

“Speech becomes autonomous”, he argues, from different modes of expression, different contexts of action, established normative patterns, and identity or “subjectivity” (2001b:144). As a result, however, steering problems within speech acts are resolved by the external organization of speech. For example, questions arise in the social realm regarding who participates and how they participate (active versus passive). In the temporal realm, questions pertain to who begins and ends conversations, and who contributes, and the frequency and order of those contributions. And, issues concerning content involve ordering and definitions of topics, the breadth and depth of conversations (2001b:144-145). Furthermore, speech is where plans of action are decided and organized, where individual (and collective) needs are coordinated. It is possible, therefore, for each participant to influence the external organization of speech by altering the normative context in order to favor one person. In other words, autonomous speech allows for the strategic use of communicative action such that participants’ commitment to achieving consensus does not appear to be violated (2001b:145). As an example, Habermas points to “habitual speech strategies” within familial discursive practices which involve “the undeclared pursuit of unapproved interests under the presupposition of consensual action (and consensual conflict resolution)” (2001b:145).

Habermas connects pathogenesis to problems concerning the external organization of speech. The “key” to pathogenesis, he maintains, “lies in a certain *overburdening of the external organization of speech*”. Distorting effects develop when pressures on the external organization of speech are “shifted” to its internal organization. He uses the term distortion to underscore the importance of the “universal and unavoidable presuppositions” of communicative action, which organize speech internally. Distorted communication violates these universal presuppositions. Interestingly, even a “flawed communication” may enjoy a “cultural sense of normalcy” (2001b:147). It may be understood as normal practice: for example, the generic use of the pronoun ‘he’ as inclusive.

Habermas cites a few examples of distorted communication which reflect all three validity claims (sincerity, rightness and truth). (a) Sincerity can only be tested against the “consistency of the consequences of action”. You are sincere if it shows in what you do. When a woman strategically “pretends to have feelings” for her partner, in order to maintain (the “normative context”) of her relationship and of her family, there is only the appearance of reciprocation concerning the expected exchange of feelings between herself and her partner. While the presuppositions for reaching consensus are maintained at a manifest level, at the latent level, one partner, through her strategic actions, “intentionally” violated the presupposition of sincerity. A similar violation in the organization of speech occurs if she were to deceive both herself and her partner. Only this time the distortion is traceable to the “psyche” of the woman (2001b:151-152).

(b) Regarding normative rightness, a claim must accord with the intended normative context. If it does not, the claim will not achieve its purpose, mutual understanding. A person cannot want to achieve consensus and at the same time “violate recognized norms and values”. Neither inappropriate behavior (e.g. being too informal at a formal meeting) nor incompetence (e.g., behaving awkwardly in formal contexts) will distort communication. However, if a disagreement occurs between partners regarding the “normative background” of someone’s self-image, a “repressed and disguised” conflict may develop into distorted communication (2001b:152-153).

(c) Finally, truth claims do not involve the same kind of “warrant” within “small talk” as within “scientific discussions”. Unintentional mistakes are not accountable. Errors are different from lying; they do not affect the internal organization of speech. In fact, “discovering mistakes is a condition of learning”. The internal organization of speech is not damaged by a speaker who lies openly and declares her strategic action. Lies distort only when they “disguise a conflict” (2001b:153-154).

Habermas suggests that conflicts of identity, which originate with the “unconscious repression of threats” to either group or individual identity, will “smolder” if they are “neither openly carried out nor resolved consensually”. Identity

is unequivocally dependent upon the recognition it receives within everyday communicative interactions, at any level of social interaction: “cross-cultural”, “international”, “among friends and family”. Simply, if recognition is withheld, “identity is threatened”. Defensive strategies used to protect identity, which are strategic in nature, are paradoxical. On the one side, strategic actions are success oriented (e.g., “purposive action”) not consensus oriented. However, on the other side, the goal of voluntary recognition cannot be achieved strategically. The problem, according to Habermas, is that identity “cannot be won by force”. Strategically achieved recognition is either “disingenuous or apparent”. In either case, if it fails, it was not serious (2001b:155-156).

Habermas claims that personalities (i.e., identity) of family members (within the modern family system) are dynamic and open to change. Family does not have “strong functional specifications”. Family is capable of meeting a “broad spectrum of needs”. Family does not predefine standards for relationships. And, family allows considerable freedom for “individual self-expression”. In principle, all aspects of family can be thematized for discussion and debate. These descriptions point toward the importance of identity formation within family through social individuation (or individuating socialization). Identity is dependent upon the nature of the discursive practices which prevail in a given familial context. These practices can inhibit or foster identity forming experiences such as mutual recognition and empathy. In fact, Habermas claims that distorted communications originating with identity formation occur frequently within family (2001b:159).

Habermas identifies several significant functional accomplishments of family. It is: a “privileged site of identity management” for children and adults; a central social location which “obliges” members to orient their actions towards mutual understanding; a source of regulation for “informal relationships and intimate face-to-face interactions”; and a web of interpersonal relationships which act as “channels” for the exchange of feelings and emotions (“affect”) and knowledge (“cognitive”) (2001b:159). Although Habermas focuses on distorted practices, the

implications of non-distorted communicative practices for family solidarity are striking.

The nature of the discursive space between an individual and a family group is fundamentally important for developing the sensibilities and capabilities necessary for the moral-practical demands (e.g., peaceful coexistence) of living in a complex, pluralistic world. Habermas does emphasize the significance of growing up in a halfway normal (1997:86), “halfway healthy” (1997:73) or “reasonably functional” (1993:114) family. The preceding discussion of linguistic competence and distorted communicative practices certainly reinforces his views regarding the normative resources available within our everyday communicative practices.

In order that family maintain itself as reasonably functional four system problems must be adequately resolved: optimal need satisfaction, securing identity, securing autonomy, and socializing children. Resolving socialization issues depends upon the extent the other three problems have been redressed satisfactorily. It is for this reason that Habermas focuses on the first three in his work on communicative pathology. He identifies several experiential dimensions within these problems, in order to show their relevance to the distorting effects of shifting unsolved problems onto the internal organization of speech. Some of those dimensions are highlighted here.

(a) The need satisfaction of individual members has its correlate in “mutual giving and taking”. Two of the dimensions are: the distribution of the “balance of gratifications” (satisfaction versus frustration); and immediate and delayed gratifications. (b) Securing identity can be examined in terms of: the regulation of social distance within interactions; the distribution of opportunities for initiative, as opposed to passive acceptance; and the “degree of divergence and difference” within normative orientations. And (c), the autonomy of family from its environment is an issue of “boundaries”: the extent family opens and closes; the extent family maintains itself as a unit in respect to “family issues and myths”; and the connections between “internal communicative networks” and “extrafamilial forces” (2001b:160-161). Some of these dimensions (e.g., gratifications, normative

orientations) are very relevant to the empirical analysis which follows in the next section.

Habermas concludes that “family’s ability to solve problems” is inversely related to “its internal potential for conflict”. As well, the internal potential for conflict is directly related to the “*distribution of power*”. The greater the power imbalance between adult family members becomes, the greater the probability of an “asymmetrical distribution of the chances each individual has of attaining a satisfactory balance of gratifications”. As conflicts surrounding gratifications and identity remain unaddressed, identity management within family becomes problematic (2001b:161). He draws the following “tentative conclusions” regarding the characteristics of families which exhibit disturbances within their communications: “Symptomatic families of this sort are characterized by an asymmetrical distribution of power, with dominance relations and coalition formations, as well as by corresponding tensions, discrepant expectations, reciprocal deprecation, and so on.” Conflicts such as these smolder because the preconditions for reaching understanding and thereby addressing them “do not exist”. Furthermore, styles of communication which prepare a space for discourse – “joking, irony, and forms of trivializing and neutralizing” – occur less frequently in symptomatic families (2001b:161-162). The importance of characteristics such as mutual respect, reciprocity, joking and talking about problems will also become apparent in the empirical analysis of Canadian families.

Habermas proffers four dimensions he believes can enhance our understanding of the communicative dynamics of symptomatic families: “proximity/distance”; “equality/difference”; “activity/passivity”; and “demarcation of the family system” (“inside and outside”). In each case, when “interactive” (communicative) and “role” (sex, age) structures are “too rigid”, flexibility within the four aforementioned dimensions is affected. The development of individual (and group) identities becomes abbreviated. Communicative action then becomes “overburdened” with conflicts that manifest themselves in distorted communications. Some important observations he makes about the flexibility problematic have

relevance for our empirical interest in non-distorted familial relationships. (a) Regarding proximity/distance, inflexible gender/generation roles can “permeate all interactions”. Rigidly maintained social distance can lead to group splintering or to forced solidarity.

(b) In the equality/difference dimension, individual family members require the freedom for self-presentation. If they are unable to synthesize aspects of sameness and difference, strategies will be developed “to mask the contrast between tolerated self-images and actual behavior”. When the congruence of self-images of family members is high, “overpowering stereotypes” can intervene in identity formation. When self-image congruence is low, the absence of “normative agreement” can lead to the loss of solidarity. (c) Concerning activity/passivity, an unequal distribution of power can lead to one member influencing and even determining another member’s initiatives. When dominance relations become habitualized, “consideration for the desires of marginalized family members” becomes scarce.

Finally (d), “inside and outside” refers to symptomatic families which are not able to regulate their relationships with the outside world. Families do not have an autonomous “capacity for self-regulation”. Their contacts with others are not as well-organized. And, they are more open to outside influence, especially from extended family. The result, Habermas suggests, is that family members will isolate themselves. In all four dimensions, disturbances become manifested where the “thinly veiled” use of strategic action is employed in contexts where communicative action “must nevertheless not be abandoned” (2001b:162-164)

By way of summary, Habermas draws one very important conclusion – a “basic hypothesis” – in respect to family cohesiveness (family solidarity): “Skewed power relations, unequal distribution of opportunities of need satisfaction, and conflict threaten a family’s cohesiveness” (B. Fultner, personal correspondence 2002). The consequent inflexibility within the external organization of speech limits the potential for members to “develop and maintain” their identities – that is, “without mistrust”. A manifest disruption in communication “would make identity conflicts

insoluble". In order to contain conflict, pressure must be placed upon the ideal presuppositions of communications oriented toward reaching understanding. The distorting effect – of pressure on the internal organization of communications – is the appearance of a pseudo "family consensus" (Habermas, 2001b:165).

Throughout the discussion of Habermas' views on communicative pathologies within family, an attempt has been made to draw attention to specific themes which are relevant to the focus of this study (e.g., linguistic competence, ideal presuppositions, solidarity, mutual reciprocity). One key point is that certain characteristics he uses to profile symptomatic families can be used here to examine the potential for non-distorted familial relations. Three further observations Habermas makes should be considered. First, communicative action, action oriented toward mutual understanding, involves "understanding", "being understood" and "feeling to have been understood" (2001b:158). In terms of the latter, if an individual feels she has not been understood, the conditions of speech can be affected, as can the collective sense of a family project.

Second, communicative pathologies have their origin in conflicts of identity formation (2001b:169). However, in this context, Habermas has not been directly concerned with socialization and solidarity. And, third, conflicts of identity and distorted communicative practices "are part of a circular process" of intergenerational transfers. Problems of identity development and of distorted communicative practices within parents' lives are reproduced within the lives of successive generations. They are produced and reproduced within "deviant formative processes" (e.g., socialization, need fulfillment). Families with distorted communicative structures reproduce them. Habermas does suggest that these are "[s]implistic assumptions" concerning "diffusion and transmission" which should undergo further clarification. Considering the intersubjective nature and the productive capacity of everyday language, and considering the importance of social individuation for establishing and maintaining identity, the notion of intergenerational transfers of non-distorted (versus distorted) communicative structures also becomes

a plausible hypothesis. The contours of such a family structure is taken up below (4.4).

4.3.5 COMMENTS

Further comments regarding (a) types of discourse within family and (b) solidarity are required. (a) Types of discourse. The complexities of family discourse can be understood in terms of Habermas' distinction between three types of discourse: pragmatic, ethical and moral (1993:2ff; 1998d:432; 1998a:25ff; 1996b:97-99, 157ff, 180ff). The differentiation of these discourses provides an analytic window into the emancipatory potential of communicative sociation within family. On the one hand, and unlike the discursive practices within the political public sphere, family talk remains thoroughly embedded within particular value orientations, normative contexts and identities. On the other hand, but like the political public sphere, family life-structures have become open to discursive determination.

Pragmatic, ethical and moral discourses provide different standpoints from which social problems can be addressed and through which social actions can be coordinated. Pragmatic discourses aim at establishing expedient or effective courses of action in order to achieve a predetermined goal. Pragmatic questions therefore focus on selecting the most suitable or efficient means for achieving a goal, given an actor's personal preferences. As she compares and assesses alternative strategies and techniques as to their usefulness, an actor relates her empirical knowledge to her preferences (and goals). At this level of communication, shared values and established normative standards are not problematic. Pragmatic issues are decided on the basis of expediency. Within families many daily issues are resolved according to pragmatic discourse: choice of restaurant for dinner; where to purchase groceries; choice of color to paint the house. However, families are not just about efficiency and means. The very nature of family is bound up with a cooperative project which must, at times, question shared values and norms.

Ethical discourse is concerned with problematic goals or ends. Goals or ends are not predetermined as they are in pragmatic discourse. Ethical issues are

concerned with questions about who I am, who I want to be and who we want to be, as a family for example. They aim at a successful or not-misspent life-history or way of living. The ethical community is bounded by shared values which orient behavior towards images of the good life for me or for us. Ethical questions therefore are directed toward life-histories which are embedded in a shared form of life (e.g., values, norms).

Within ethical discourse we make judgements about our value orientations and our self-understanding. Because these questions have to do with shared values and individual and group self-understanding, an ethical perspective must move beyond subjective experience and preferences. Preferences are debatable. Responses to questions concerning what is best for me or for us are guided by our self-understanding. Ethical problems facing a contemporary family might include: deciding whether to move from a small town to a large city; or a married couple, each of different religious backgrounds, struggling with decisions regarding how to raise their children. Unlike pragmatic problems, ethical and moral issues require a discursive orientation.

Moral discourse, however, is oriented towards how we (everyone) *ought* to act. Moral questions use a normative perspective in order to examine how best to regulate our interactions so that everyone could agree and so that everyone's interests are respected. Unlike an ethical community, the moral community is an unlimited community. Therefore, moral discourse requires participants to step back from their embeddedness in concrete communities, from their strong convictions about family and community for instance, in order to reach a consensual agreement. The aim of moral discourse is to find a just solution to a normative conflict. Thus, only very general normative standards are universalizable. Whether in fact the norm is appropriate in a concrete circumstance, is also a matter of moral discourse. An example of a moral issue would be human rights violations such as ethnic cleansing and child abuse. Opinions concerning these issues are certainly qualified and refined within families' discursive practices.

Sometimes disagreements – “collisions of discourses” – arise concerning how to resolve specific social issues. A collision of discourses develops when an agreement cannot be reached concerning whether a conflict is about “compromisable interests or irreconcilable values”, or about ethical or moral issues. When there is a collision of discourses, the mode of questioning (within each discourse) indicates “where it is rational to cross boundaries”: “compromises must be in harmony with the basic ethical values acknowledged by a particular group, and that these values in turn must be in harmony with valid moral principles”. Thus, Habermas suggests that a model of “interdiscursive relations” emerges: the just (moral discourse) is privileged over the good (ethical discourse) and the ethical over the pragmatic (1998d:432).

All three forms of discourse pervade our everyday familial experiences, though moral questions to a lesser extent than ethical and pragmatic. Ethical-existential questions are often of greater concern to our daily lives – determining who we are and want to be (1993:151). We often have stronger convictions about our values, forms of life and life-histories than we do about the lives of strangers who live in distant lands. Family, as a shared life-project (e.g., raising children), is a social space where our strong convictions reinforce our solidary ties. Moral issues of justice are much more general in nature and require a more abstractive discursive process. The same rational standards (ideal presuppositions) must undergird ethical as well as moral discourses, otherwise mutual understanding would not be possible. Even compromises, to be acceptable to disputing parties, require legitimate and rational rules and procedures for dispute resolution. Of course within family these rules and procedures will be informal. Nevertheless we all have an intuitive understanding regarding fair procedure, and we all know how we feel when the basic relational symmetries and reciprocities of communicative action are violated.

Habermas contends that the basic “attitudes and feelings” which “regulate everyday conflicts of interaction” have an internal connection to the “reasons and discursive exchanges” we use to coordinate our actions: “these discourses do not

interrupt everyday practice; rather they form part of it". Moral judgements would not be socially effective otherwise. The just (the moral) is embedded in the good (the ethical). Embeddedness simply means that assuming there is a "single right answer" to every moral question (at that moment) is "risky" (2003d:272). He goes on to explain his position:

That a cognitive conception of morality is possible means only that we can know how we ought legitimately to govern our lives together if we are determined to take the sharply delimited questions of justice that – like questions of truth – are subject to a binary code out of the broad spectrum of conceptions of the Good about which it is no longer feasible to reach a consensus. (2003d:272).

Habermas is adamant that we cannot implement morality. Rather, "we all learn it on our own if we grow up in halfway healthy conditions" (1997:73). Elsewhere he states that we learn our moral "conceptions" through "common experiences of injured integrity and withheld recognition". These conceptions originate within "very basic experiences in any halfway normal family" (1997:86). His use of "halfway healthy" and "halfway normal" to describe the discursive conditions within family life is instructive. Even though our everyday familial experiences are anything but ideal, we still learn from them. One must wonder, though, what the other half – the halfway unhealthy or halfway non-normal – family must be like. Still, the cauldron of family experience has significant pedagogical potential. Habermas concludes his study of communicative pathology by hypothesizing that communicative and identity problems are transmitted intergenerationally. By contrast, in other contexts he stresses the importance of family for learning the basic moral sensibilities and capabilities necessary for a public life of moral-practical discourse. If, as Habermas argues, there are symptomatic families which are subject to communicative pathologies, what characteristics, then, might typify an emancipated family form?

(b) Solidarity. Traditionally social life was "normatively bundled" (1992b:195) and quasi-natural. However, lifeworld rationalization has released the productive power of everyday communicative practices (2001c:154) so that individuals have become responsible for coordinating their own life-plans and life-actions. Solidarity

(bonds of oneness) has been released from “inherited values and norms” and from “established and standardized communicative patterns” (1992b:195). In the west at least, family ties have become open and changeable. Yet family remains embedded within the ethos of established ethical communities where individual action orientations are guided by a person’s strong convictions – certain beliefs, values, norms, self-images. The ethical self-image a person has of herself, as a member of her family, is a strong source of motivation for developing and achieving her life-plans.

Family is a “thick network of interactions” (1996b:365) within which bonds of oneness develop around shared values and norms, meeting each other’s needs, developing a shared life-project (e.g., raising children), and resolving problems. Family, like friendship, is positioned – socially and temporally – between the individual and society, though its mediation function is often distorted, as Habermas’ study of communicative pathology demonstrates. The path to individuation begins in family, and proceeds smoothly in so far as the relations of reciprocity and symmetry necessary for communicatively coordinating interaction remain intact. Habermas maintains that, “Since individuation is achieved through the socializing medium of thick linguistic communication, the integrity of individuals is particularly dependent on the respect underlying their dealings with others” (2003b:54). The internal relationship between solidarity and justice conditions both our life-experiences (e.g., social individuation) and our life-chances (e.g., identity formation and maintenance). Our empathy and concern for others, and the responsible autonomous decisions we make in our families, cultivate a consciousness capable of moral-practical discourse. The voice of reason speaks loudly through our solidary relations in family and in society generally.

The productive power of language to generate and regenerate the solidarity necessary for bringing global economic networks under democratic governance is rooted in family. The balance of resources within the lifeworld-system interchange model will not self-correct. Confronted, as we are, by “the all-pervasive language of the market [which] puts all interpersonal relations under the constraint of an

egocentric orientation toward one's own preferences" (2003b:110), the productive power – the solidarity generating power – of our discursive practices must embolden our practices of self-determination. As Habermas points out, "The social bond ... being made up of mutual recognition, cannot be spelled out in the concepts of contract, rational choice, and maximal benefit alone" (2003b:110). Systemic imperatives need not distort our communicative practices. In the next section (4.4) Habermas' theoretical ideas are used as a window to explore the emancipatory potential within Canadian families.

4.4 CANADIAN FAMILIES: SOME EMPIRICAL OBSERVATIONS

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Habermas, our everyday communicative practices have a productive capacity for generating and maintaining non-oppressive forms of life. In other words, everyday talk conditions life-practices, establishes life-relations and transforms life-orders. In terms of the social action – social order dynamic, our social actions establish social order and foster social change. Emancipation, understood as an intersubjective learning process through which we extend our ethical and moral horizons, must originate with social actors themselves. Neither administrative power nor money can engender emancipated life-forms. Within modern complex social formations, members of national or global society must rely on their own normative resources for coordinating their own interactions. The same proviso holds for simple interactions, within family for example.

Within Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange model (see Figure 2.6), only consensually oriented discursive practices – centered in an open (political) public sphere – can generate the solidary relations capable of grounding radical democratic (moral-practical) impulses. The legitimacy and rationality of modern legally ordered societies depends upon the potential for a radical democratic translation of moral-practical concerns into a form capable of influencing system (law) and compensating for socio-economic inequalities (administrative programs). Law, for example, circulates moral-practical interests throughout functionally integrated systems (e.g., economic practices driven by profit). Radical democracy

requires that administrative and legislative decisions be structured by normative reasons (1996b:xlii, 352, 372, 484; 1997:76, 164). Normative reasons devolve from a critical public discourse. Critical discourse generates “acceptable interpretations” of “social interests and experiences”, and orients collective efforts towards resolving social issues (1996b:367, 314). Habermas refers to the (political) public sphere as a social space for communicatively developing and refining “opinions” (attitudes), beliefs (values), and “motives” (convictions) (1997:164; 1996b:485). Networks of such communicative practices cannot be forged by administrative power. The public sphere becomes, for Habermas, a yardstick for measuring the “political civilization of a community” (1997:165; 1996b:485).

My interest in family lies at a different, though not unrelated, level. Can a similar yardstick be used to assess the emancipatory (civilizing) nature of discursive practices within familial relations, in the private sphere? Habermas considers his reconstruction of the social conditions (public spaces for open critical debate) and normative contents (ideal presuppositions of communicative action and of argumentation), which are necessary for radical democracy, to be a “critical standard” for evaluating “actual practices” (1996b:5). Reaching understanding, achieved either routinely through communicative action or hypothetically through argumentation, is the telos of everyday language use. Ordinary language is uniquely positioned as a mechanism for consensually coordinating activities and resolving everyday problems (1996b:55, 353). Within our everyday communicative practices we “cannot avoid” using ordinary language to coordinate our actions with others peacefully (1994b:101). Language oriented to consensus requires that participants practice certain idealizations: the inclusion of everyone involved, the consideration of all positions and views, the acceptance of reasons agreeable to everyone, and the avoidance of force or influence. On the one hand, these idealizations have become “constitutive for socio-cultural forms of life” (society) (1994b:102). These suppositions ground everyday activities. For example, couples routinely fulfill their daily obligations to care for their children on the assumption of an established and consensual but changeable family life-project.

On the other hand, ideal presuppositions are unavoidable within everyday communicative practices, in the private spheres of family or friendship. The embeddedness of communicative sociation within family raises a number of questions. How do we utilize the normative content of communicative action within thick, emotionally laden familial conversation? And, if emancipation means liberation from restrictions and oppressions through responsible and autonomous action, what are the implications of moral learning processes for family life? Also, if emancipation involves the conjoint effect of self-understanding and autonomy (1994b:103), how does it play out within everyday family talk and, consequently, within family relationships? Given the epochal changes family has recently undergone, given the importance attributed to 'halfway functional' and 'halfway normal' familial experience for meeting needs and for identity formation, and given the rational potential of everyday communicative practices, which characteristics, from a Habermasian perspective, best describe emancipatory practices within contemporary families? And, is there *prima facie* evidence of an emancipated family form within everyday life, in Canada for example?

The utility of my research project is both theoretical and practical. Firstly, it provides a conceptual model for explaining the normative conditions – relations of symmetry and reciprocity – necessary for establishing emancipated life-conditions within family, for understanding the importance of new configurations of solidarity within family, for articulating the interconnections between family and society, and for delineating the internal connections between family and social change. Secondly, pragmatically, it lays the groundwork for future research projects. In order to investigate the social dynamic within Canadian families (4.4.4), two issues need to be addressed: one, develop a conceptual framework for understanding the nature and importance of normative resources and conditions within an emancipated familial context (4.4.2); and two, operationalize the conceptual framework in order to analyze secondary data from a Statistics Canada study (4.4.3).

4.4.2 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

An emancipated familial life-form would be, at a minimum, constraint free, discursively coordinated and democratically grounded. We should not, however, equate emancipation with either happiness or a concrete form of life. Emancipation does not necessarily lead to happiness, at least not “automatically”. It does make us “more independent” (1994b:107), therefore more capable of self-understanding, self-determination and self-realization. Also, we can only approximate the ideal presuppositions necessary for achieving consensus within our everyday concrete discursive practices (1993:163-164; 31-32). Consequently, emancipation is an empirical question. Participants must cooperatively and communicatively determine their life-circumstances within the parameters of existing social formations, within the contemporary lifeworld-system interchange. Habermas’ theory of rationalization suggests that family members have the resources, the ability and the will to consensually meet their material life-needs, to establish and coordinate their life-goals, to resolve issues of action coordination and of domination, and to renew or renegotiate a sense of oneness or solidarity within a common life-project. Family, as a common and cooperative project, has become increasingly autonomous, and therefore fragile.

The structural transformation of family has created the potential for socialization conditions which are at once liberating, demanding and vulnerable. Three characteristics of this transformation are responsible social actors, egalitarian relationships, and liberated child-rearing practices (Habermas 1987c: 387). Increasingly, family members have become responsible for their own actions. They are freed from ascriptive norms such as those embedded within differentiated sex roles. Couples can consensually negotiate and renegotiate as equals. Child-rearing practices are not scripted but organized around preferred choices, and are discursive rather than simply authoritative. Normative prescriptions for behavior are being replaced with mutual cooperation based on consensus. And of course, transformed families require relational conditions characterized by reciprocity, empathy and concern. Just how autonomous or emancipated family has become

is what is at issue in this research. In order to investigate emancipation within family it is necessary to assay Habermas' critical theory for possible empirical referents. These referents will be discussed under three themes: (a) privateness; (b) identity formation; and (c) solidarity.

(a) *Privateness.* Family, along with kin networks and friendships, is characterized by privateness. Here, identity is formed and needs are met. In contrast, the public sphere is distinguished by its publicness. It is a social space for moral-practical deliberation about problems and issues of concern to everyone, beyond, but not excluding, family. The "threshold" separating family and public sphere is discursive, and therefore porous. The private and public spheres are not separated by fixed "issues or relationships" (e.g., socialization practices, wife-husband roles). On the one hand, individual life-histories become "antennae" (1996b:365) for sensing social problems and issues (e.g., unemployment). On the other hand, the public sphere becomes a "sounding board" (2003d:289) for the formation of public opinion concerning society wide problems. Of course discussion of these problems may first take place within family, but a universal consensus and a collective response to these social problems must be sought elsewhere, at higher levels of intersubjectivity. Communicative conditions, privateness and publicness, protect the privacy of family while at the same time facilitating radical democratic action within the (political) public sphere.

Habermas describes the discursive practices within private spheres' core areas (family, friendships, co-workers) in several ways. Family is a social space within which individual life-histories interconnect. Personal or intimate "face-to-face" relationships (1996b:354) are comprised of simple but thick networks of interactions, or of communicative actions (1996b:365; 2003b:54). These thick face-to-face relationships, however, are opaque (e.g., value laden) and mediated (e.g., emotionally constituted and constrained). As well, familial relationships involve a form of "elemental normativity" which finds expression within relations of reciprocity and symmetry (1999:448). Habermas' use of the term elemental suggests that the pragmatic suppositions of communicative action are present within everyday

language use and that they are subject to moderating and suppressing influences, such as power, influence and emotion.

Nevertheless, consensual interaction based on reaching understanding demands egalitarian universalism. Consensus based on good reasons requires that family members must “attune themselves” (2003b:54, 55) to the normative presuppositions necessary for achieving consensus based on good reasons. Breaching these pragmatic assumptions will delimit agreement and may lead to communicative pathologies. Individual integrity depends on the “respect” each member shows the other, as they attempt to discursively resolve problems (2003b:54), and upon their freedom to participate and be heard within discussion. Communicative sociation can also be facilitated by joking, general conversation, and, to a certain extent, argument (1998c:163; 2001b:161-162). Thick communicative practices within family tend to devolve around “moral convictions” and established normative standards. Identities and needs are embedded within strongly held value orientations (e.g., traditional or egalitarian gender roles). Thus, ethical-existential issues and questions (e.g., appropriate teenage behavior) tend to dominate discourse in families.

(b) Identity Formation. Patterns of socialization, and therefore our identities, are embedded within everyday communicative sociations. Family life-experience is molded by established value patterns and normative arrangements. The more autonomous and responsible we become, the more our values and norms can be critically evaluated and changed. Importantly, learning processes occur within both ethical and moral discourse. Ethical insight and moral insight interconnect through the process of learning: “We learn who we are by simultaneously learning to see differently in relationships with others” (1994b:104). In both cases, the normative presuppositions of communicative action must be sufficiently approximated in order for consensus to be achieved. Thus, ethical questions can be addressed and answered rationally. What is best for us as a family, which is determined through our autonomous choices, should be understood as a response to a question of

identity – who are we or who do we want to be (1993:127). Intersubjective interests supersede personal preferences.

Only when a person enters into the communicative practices of family – “the public sphere of a linguistic community” – does she become both an “individual” and “endowed with reason” (2003b:35): “[an] infant first becomes a person by entering the public space of a social world which awaits [her]... with open arms” (2004b:3). The outside world is reflected on the inside of each person, through a common value system or belief system of a community for example. The fabric of our identity is communicatively woven, first of all, within the intersubjective dependencies and reciprocities of family life. We are socialized into individuation (2003b:34). More specifically, we become persons as we are integrated into a “*public* context of interaction”. As a child enters the world of intersubjectivity, she learns how to “*approach* it, address it and talk to it” (2003b:34-35). However, identity can be “stabilized” only within a “network of undamaged relations of mutual recognition” (2003b:34).

Relations of reciprocal dependency create vulnerability. We can be hurt by others; and, we can hurt others. Habermas provides the following explanation: “The person is most exposed to, and least protected from, injuries in the very relations which she is most dependent on for the development of her identity and for the maintenance of her integrity” (2003b:34). Autonomy is not independence per se. Autonomy should be understood as the recognition of and the consideration given to personal vulnerability and social interdependence (2003b:34). Relations of mutual recognition are “built into” our everyday communicative practices. We learn our “basic” moral intuitions as we grow up in family: “We look at each other in reciprocal ways, face each other as vulnerable beings, learn how to treat each other on equal grounds, to acknowledge each other as deserving mutual respect and being in need of mutual help” (1999:448). On the one hand, how we understand ourselves determines how we interact with others. On the other hand, this understanding is only stabilized through everyday relations of reciprocal recognition.

Habermas considers family to be “a privileged site of identity management” for both children (identity formation) and adults (identity management) (2001b:151). Family members are obliged to orient their actions toward reaching understanding. This means that feeling understood and being understood are both integral to reaching consensus and to achieving plans of action (2001b:158). In contrast, members employing strategic action objectify other family members, and manipulate them for their own purpose(s): for instance, a husband may lie about his activities while away from home and be insincere about his affections towards his wife in order to hide an ongoing affair. While we are socialized into stable identities (1998a:27, 29), they are not permanent etchings. Rather, identity is a narrative in progress, a story which is discursively and intersubjectively constructed.

The intimacy of familial relationships is regulated by a “diffuse structure of roles” which are not absolute. Traditional generational (parent-child) and gender roles (wife-homemaker and husband-breadwinner) are subject to a reflective and critical interpretive gaze. The functional specifications of family are loose enough to meet a wide spectrum of needs and desires. Relationships between family members are open rather than closed, negotiable rather than fixed. There is significant room for individual expression within the boundaries of the modern family. However, the strong convictions which individuals hold regarding their values, beliefs and normative standards will mitigate this interpretive process. Ultimately, disturbances within communicative sociation can create problems within identity formation, which, in turn, can be transmitted intergenerationally. If there is an asymmetrical distribution of power, if need satisfaction is not balanced, and if there is an imbalance of gratifications among family members, then family’s ability to solve problems, to socialize children, to maintain adult identities and to retain a non-pathological solidarity will be severely restricted (2001b:159ff).

(b) Solidarity. Modern life-forms are no longer socially integrated through “inherited values and norms” (2001c:154). With the dissolution of traditional standardized practices (gender roles, career and family), and with the trend toward individualization, social actors have become saddled with responsibility for

developing and maintaining new forms of social integration through mutual consensus: "Liberated subjects ... have to fashion new commitments by the force of their own communicative efforts alone" (2001c:156). As new circumstances and problems arise (new acquaintances, divorce), social actors generate new bonds (new friendships, remarriage). Everyday language oriented toward reaching consensus has a productive capacity for generating and sustaining solidary ties (2001c:154; 1996b:148).

However, reaching agreement requires both solidarity and justice, simultaneously (1998a:35). Neither stands alone. Bonds of oneness require the assurance of impartiality, which assumes inclusivity. On the one hand, the reproduction of bonds of oneness requires reciprocal recognition between participants. On the other hand, each individual must have the opportunity to influence the decision making process (1993:154). Everyone's interests must be considered equally without breaking the preexisting bond between them (1998a:35). If solidarity is understood as "the well-being of associated members", then members must demonstrate "empathy" and "concern" for others. And, if justice is conceptualized as freedom and individuality, then individual members of a community must have equal rights, to participate and be heard (1990:200).

Within family, however, the relational dynamic is complicated by strong convictions, beliefs and feelings. The presence of strong emotional feelings (love, resentment), deeply felt values (church attendance), established normative practices (traditional and egalitarian gender role orientations), and reciprocal interdependence and vulnerability (socialization of children) inherent within communicatively achieved cooperation, suggest that solidarity can be both tenuous and changeable. Habermas contends that family cohesiveness depends upon balanced power relations, appropriate need satisfaction and constrained conflict (2001b:165).

In order to establish and maintain a common life-project of any kind, familial or political, requires participants to practice solidarity. Solidarity, in turn, is generated and regenerated within our everyday consensus oriented communicative practices.

Without a sense of oneness, communicative practices in the family or in the political public sphere are foundationless. We establish bonds of oneness through discursively achieved consensus regarding common interests, needs and goals, and through cooperative efforts to achieve those goals (1991c:44). Within discursive practices oriented toward mutual agreement, solidary relations are generated through the equal participation and equal consideration of everyone's interests. Within family, reaching consensus discursively binds individuals together (1987a:346-347).

Contemporarily, economic imperatives subject "all interpersonal relations" to "an egocentric orientation" toward personal preferences (2003b:110). The extent to which family members focus on their personal wants and needs can affect the extent to which they orient themselves to achieving understanding. Everyday life will reflect both. Since the relations of mutual recognition which underlie solidarity cannot be replaced by egocentrism, an appropriate balance between these orientations must be worked out by family members. This balance is achieved through everyday discourse. There is a parallel between the need for balancing family-work relationships and balancing lifeworld-system resources. Imbalance may result in family-work tensions. In a reasonably functional family, marketplace concerns should not subjugate ethical-moral insight.

Given a Habermasian conceptual framework, what can we expect an emancipated family life-form to involve? We could expect to find a consensually oriented form of discourse or talk, a concordant familial relationship. Intense and persistent argument should not be commonplace. Communicative practices which facilitate communicative action, such as laughter and chatting (e.g., about work, children, neighbors), should also be present. We would also expect individuals who describe their relationships as happy to be more communicative. Furthermore, members who were raised within reasonably (halfway) normal families, will be more likely to engage in communicative actions oriented to reaching understanding. They will be more likely to express strong feelings of happiness about their early childhood experience and of warmth about their parents. Concordant relationships

are cultivated and maintained by relations of symmetry (inclusivity, equal opportunity to participate) and relations of reciprocity (uncoerciveness, openness to better argument). Furthermore, to what extent can shared values and gender role beliefs, household size, income, occupation, level of education, level of employment, household division of labour, health and stress be considered empirical indicators of relational concordance?

If we are to realize a better life, then our everyday practices, our socialization processes, our traditions, our behaviors, our attitudes, must be given shape in familial relationships which are neither coercive nor authoritarian. Obviously values, norms, empathy, reciprocity, symmetry, responsibility and life long socialization play an important role in facilitating social change directed towards a better life. The everyday experience of solidarity and fairness shapes our identities and conditions our relationships within families. These experiences become resources for changing our life-circumstances.

4.4.3 METHODOLOGY

According to a Habermasian framework for understanding emancipation within familial relationships, everyday discursive practices of reaching understanding are foundational. Family members must engage in democratic discourse. Of course the pragmatic and empirical question is, what are the characteristic features of families which engage in democratic discourse? In order to profile an emancipated relational dynamic within family, logistic regression is used to analyze a secondary Canadian data source on family.

The data used for this analysis is from the General Social Survey Cycle 10 on the Canadian family (1995; hereafter referred to as GSS10). The GSS10 (as do all Cycles) addresses two concerns: on the one hand, to understand changing family experience in Canada; and, on the other hand, to provide relevant information about Canadian family experience for policy formation and program development. Generally speaking, these concerns coincide with the objectives of this research. The data provides a number of empirical referents reflecting different aspects of family life: communicative practices, structural (background) information,

values, attitudes, behaviors, health. The population of the GSS10 was all persons 15 years and over within Canada, excluding both full-time residents of institutions and residents of Yukon and Northwest Territories.

During 1995 data were collected from 10,749 respondents who were interviewed by telephone, primarily through Random Digit Dialing. Consequently those without telephones were excluded. The sample for this analysis was 5018 respondents who indicated they had a married spouse within the home (dvpart = 1). Of the 541 variables available within the original data file, 45 have been utilized, some within scales, and others individually. A brief description of these variables and their codings can be found in Tables 4.1 and 4.3. The variables were drawn from several sections: Family Origins; Values and Attitudes (Part 1); Marriages; Common-Law Partnerships; Values and Attitudes (Part 2); Paid and Unpaid Work; Other Classification. Household size was used as a general measure of family size. Table 4.1 provides the results of Factor Analysis for a number of questions concerning values and attitudes. The intercorrelations between all variables and scales are presented in Table 4.2. These correlations reflect the larger sample size (n = 5018); they are significant, but not high (de Vaus 2002:176).

A number of scales representing different dimensions of social life were created through Factor Analysis and then assessed by Reliability Analysis (see Table 4.1). First, all items are coded for additive purposes (e.g., weak to strong). One item was recoded for a positive factor loading (dvc17r2 – employed mother can have warm relationship with children). Second, a factor loading of .40 has been used as the cutoff for inclusion within a factor. Table 4.1 shows that there was no overlap between the different factors. Third, of the nine original factors, six have been used to develop scales for this analysis: Factor 1 – Argument Scale; Factor 2 – Concordance Scale; Factor 3 – (Respondent's) Childhood Satisfaction Scale; Factor 4 – Family-Work Tension Scale; Factor 5 – Familism Scale; and Factor 7 – Parental Employment and Child Well-Being Scale.

Fourth, a more comprehensive or global Concordance Scale was constructed by combining the Argument Scale and the original Concordance Scale. The revised

TABLE 4.1 FACTOR LOADINGS FOR VARIMAX ORTHOGONAL NINE FACTOR SOLUTION WITH CHRONBACH'S ALPHA		
FACTOR SOLUTION	FACTOR LOADINGS	RELIABILITY: Chronbach's Alpha
<p>Factor 1: Argument Scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arguments about leisure time (k14) .724 Arguments about money (k11) .716 Arguments about showing affection (k12) .692 Arguments about chores and responsibilities (k8) .673 Arguments about in-laws (k17) .527 <p>Note: k8, k11, k12, k14, k17 are coded: Often (1), Sometimes (2), Hardly Ever (3) and Never (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .75$ (Global Concordance Scale)</p> <p>Reliability: $\alpha = .74$</p>
<p>Factor 2: Concordance Scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequency respondent and spouse laugh together (k5r) .864 Frequency respondent and spouse calmly discuss something (k4r) .828 Happiness with relationship (k3r) .716 <p>Note: k3r is coded: Not Too Happy (1), Happy (2), Very Happy (3); k4r and k5r are coded: < Once a Month (1), Once or Twice a Month (2), Once or Twice a Week (3), Almost Every Day (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .77$</p>
<p>Factor 3: <u>Childhood Satisfaction Scale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respondent had happy childhood (c3r) .816 Respondent had warm relationship with father (c5ar) .752 Respondent had warm relationship with mother (c5cr) .725 <p>Note: c3r, c4r, c5cr are coded: weak to strong: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), Strongly Agree (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .68$</p>
<p>Factor 4: <u>Family-work Tension Scale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Man should refuse promotion if it means less time with family (dvc27r) .929 Woman should refuse promotion if it means less time with family (dvc27br) .923 <p>Note: dvc27r and dvc27br are coded weak to strong: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), and Strongly Agree (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .83$</p>
<p>Factor 5: <u>Familism Scale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of being married (c9r) .801 Importance of having at least one child (c10r) .762 Importance of having a lasting relationship (c8r) .658 <p>Note: c8r, c9r, c10r are coded weak to strong: Not At All Important (1), Not Very Important (2), Important (3), Very Important (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .65$</p>

TABLE 4.1 FACTOR LOADINGS FOR VARIMAX ORTHOGONAL NINE FACTOR SOLUTION WITH CHRONBACH'S ALPHA		
FACTOR SOLUTION	FACTOR LOADINGS	RELIABILITY: Chronbach's Alpha
<p>Factor 6: Breadwinner Scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising children is not a man's responsibility (dvc25r) .803 A man's role is to bring enough money home (dvc26r) .764 <p>Note: dvc25r, dvc26r are coded weak to strong: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), Strongly Agree (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .52$</p>
<p>Factor 7: <u>Parental Employment and Child Well-Being Scale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-school child will suffer if both parents work (dvc21r) .837 Employed mother can have warm relationship with child(ren) (dvc17r2) .751 <p>Note: dvc21r is coded: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), Strongly Agree (4); dvc17r2 is coded: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Disagree (3), Strongly Disagree (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .60$</p>
<p>Factor 8: Life-Satisfaction Scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfied with main activity (l26ar) .747 Satisfied with balance between job/family/home (l26br) .741 Respondent has a stressful life (stress1) .515 <p>Note: l26ar, l26br are coded: Dissatisfied (1), Satisfied (2); stress1 is coded: Very (1), Somewhat (2), Not Very (3), Not At All (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .43$</p>
<p>Factor 9: Importance of Being Employed Scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having job best way for a woman to be independent (dvc18r) .799 Man and woman should both contribute to household income (dvc20r) .772 <p>Note: dvc18r, dvc20r are coded: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Agree (3), Strongly Agree (4).</p>		<p>Reliability: $\alpha = .47$</p>

TABLE 4.2 INTERCORRELATIONS FOR CONCORDANT RELATIONSHIP AND PREDICTOR VARIABLES

MEASURE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. conodep7															
2. chexpsc7	.071**														
3. childwb7	.086**	-.039*													
4. famwkt7	.007	.031	.228**												
5. famism7	.107**	.138**	.117**	.125**											
6. sex	.039*	-.029*	.130**	.029	-.009										
7. age	.346**	-.051**	.189**	.015	.031*	.094**									
8. hhsizcap	-.289**	.014	-.030*	.033*	.042**	.011	-.422**								
9. dvc18r	-.119**	-.011	-.145**	-.057**	-.059**	-.056**	.026	-.046**							
10. dvc19r	.142**	.111**	.159**	.121**	.118**	.011	.112**	-.047**	-.134**						
11. dvc20r	-.098**	.080**	-.189**	-.062**	-.009	-.070**	-.041**	-.023	.311**	-.087**					
12. dvc22r	.080**	.080**	.324**	.122**	.164**	.045**	.167**	-.002	.026	.200**	.014				
13. dvc24r	-.004	-.009	.164**	.025	.020	.009	.180**	-.066**	.140**	.064**	.104**	.281**			
14. dvc25r	.101**	-.118**	.099**	-.015	-.038**	.087**	.185**	-.028	.033*	.040**	-.060**	.114**	.139**		
15. dvc26r	.147**	-.008	.194**	.041*	.043**	.099**	.199**	-.052**	.069**	.134**	.017	.278**	.243**	.354**	
16. c11r	-.048*	.049**	-.081**	-.053**	.151**	.373**	-.093**	.034*	.167**	-.101**	.119**	-.018	.060**	-.027	-.018
17. k33r	.011	-.033*	-.169**	-.023	-.120**	-.246**	-.157**	-.038*	.017	-.082**	.044**	-.157**	-.101**	-.086**	-.156**
18. i2	-.054**	.028	.025	.051**	.069**	-.361**	-.061**	.114**	-.009	.023	.018	-.009	-.017	-.036*	-.030*
19. i3	-.277**	.040**	-.084**	.033*	.088**	-.162**	-.467**	.498**	-.060**	-.045**	.022	-.027	-.099**	-.125**	-.134**
20. i4	-.019	.021	.042**	.024	.046**	-.058**	.036*	.044**	-.015	.006	-.023	.020	-.031*	-.025	-.030*
21. rpineo	-.055*	.099**	-.134**	-.050**	-.004	.014	.014	-.003	.025	-.123**	.024	-.172**	-.079**	-.095**	-.186**
22. i26ar	.128**	.074**	-.015	-.028	.009	-.026	.067**	-.050**	-.027	.071**	-.031*	.008	-.040**	.031*	.049**
23. i26br	.136**	.001	.020	-.018	.012	-.006	.125**	-.073**	.007	.020	-.032	.033	-.007	.045*	.095**
24. hrsresp1	.026	.002	-.004	-.029	-.062**	.414**	-.009	.004	-.016	-.012	-.027	-.033	.043*	.074**	.021
25. hrsspou1	-.030	.045*	-.131**	-.054**	-.017	-.408**	-.098**	.029	.010	-.015	.068**	-.091**	-.003	-.039*	-.066**
26. redspous	-.100**	.083**	-.191**	-.046**	-.017	-.041**	-.259**	.114**	.001	-.128**	.021	-.198**	-.155**	-.118**	-.257**
27. redresp	-.153**	.073**	-.172**	-.056**	-.023	.041**	-.219**	.078**	-.008	-.156**	.006	-.216**	-.148**	-.128**	-.287**
28. health1	.039*	.102**	-.100**	.005	-.008	-.036*	-.189**	.064**	.001	-.026	-.009	-.091**	-.073**	-.072**	-.104**
29. stress1	.335**	.048**	.064**	.046**	.039**	.015	.258**	-.173**	-.030*	.105**	-.039*	.095**	.036*	.082**	.121**
30. relatt1	.051*	.048**	.094**	.087**	.133**	-.061**	.098**	.079**	-.070**	.083**	-.034*	.102**	-.005	.007	.044**
31. dvr54	-.115**	.072**	-.230**	-.036*	-.081**	.079**	-.223**	.178**	.026	-.147**	.017	-.233**	-.175**	-.101**	-.249**

NOTE: * $p < .05$ (two tailed); ** $p < .01$ (two tailed).

TABLE 4.2 INTERCORRELATIONS FOR CONCORDANT RELATIONSHIP (CONTINUED)

MEASURE	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1. conodep7															
2. chexpsc7															
3. childwb7															
4. famwkt7															
5. famism7															
6. sex															
7. age															
8. hhsizcap															
9. dvc18r															
10. dvc19r															
11. dvc20r															
12. dvc22r															
13. dvc24r															
14. dvc25r															
15. dvc26r															
16. c11r															
17. k33r	-.071**														
18. i2	-.174**	.041**													
19. i3	-.028	.026	.277**												
20. i4	-.049**	-.014	.113**	.034*											
21. rpineo	.093**	-.006	-.057**	-.024	.006										
22. i26ar	-.050**	.026	-.020	-.028	-.007	.042*									
23. i26br	-.005	.037	.039*	-.064**	-.001	-.010	.231**								
24. hrsresp1	.190**	-.116**	-.301**	-.165**	-.019	.062**	-.001	-.210**							
25. hrsspou1	-.147**	.144**	.216**	.111**	.004	.026	.027	-.040	-.068**						
26. redspous	.070**	.061**	.008	.159**	.012	.295**	.009	-.009	-.019	.036*					
27. redresp	.139**	.040*	-.029	.108**	.002	.479**	-.015	-.035	-.002	.001	.469**				
28. health1	.052**	.090**	.028	.093**	-.013	.114**	.112**	.063**	-.013	-.015	.164**	.155**			
29. stress1	-.070**	-.026	.031*	-.118**	-.039**	-.162**	.123**	.228**	-.167**	-.018	-.080**	-.156**	.116**		
30. relatt1	-.095**	-.126**	.050**	.020	.044**	.014	.056**	.010	-.058**	-.016	-.008	.022	.013	.044**	
31. dvr54	.159**	.102**	-.106**	.045**	.004	.382**	.110**	-.037	.166**	.062**	.386**	.395**	.214**	-.133**	-.080**

NOTE: * $p < .05$ (two tailed); ** $p < .01$ (two tailed).

Concordance Scale (concddep7; Alpha coefficient of reliability $\alpha = .74$) represents a number of different aspects of a democratic discursive practice within everyday family life: talking, laughing, happiness with relationship, arguing. The upper (24.7%) and lower (26.9%) quartiles for this scale have been used to represent the categorical dependent variable: concordant relationship (= 1), and non-concordant relationship (= 0). A concordant discursive relationship is, at root, harmonious. Couples will feel satisfied (happy) with their relationship, calmly discuss problems, laugh together, and argue less frequently. Conversely, a non-concordant (discordant) relationship will not demonstrate these characteristics.

Fifth, four scales have been used as predictors. Scales with alpha coefficients less than .60 were not included. The Childhood Satisfaction Scale is comprised of three variables regarding the respondent's childhood experience: happy childhood, warm relationship with father and warm relationship with mother. A Parental Employment and Child Well-Being Scale is composed of opinions concerning two questions: children will suffer when both parents work; and an employed mother can have a warm relationship with her child(ren). The Familism Scale is based on three measures of family values: importance of being married, importance of having a child and importance of having a lasting relationship. Finally, a scale for Family-Work Tension was developed out of two separate questions, one asking whether a man and the other whether a women should refuse a promotion at work if it meant spending too little time with family.

A number of variables were recoded for actual responses only (e.g., no opinion = missing). Both hours worked by respondent (l14 into hrsresp1) and hours worked by spouse (r38 into hrsspou1) were collapsed into several categories. The original variable for age (dv10ag15) has seven ten year categories ranging from 15 to 75 plus. One advantage of using collapsed variables is that interpreting odds ratios (or coefficients) in terms of a unit change of a predictor makes more intuitive sense (Norusis 2003:329). Given the exploratory nature of this research, the choice of variables for inclusion in the model has been guided by the principle of complexity

rather than the principle of parsimony. Using the data available within GSS10, my goal is to identify as many predictors or characteristic features of concordance as possible. In other words, my focus is on the individual independent variables, and not on the model per se.

4.4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Logistic regression is a useful statistical technique for predicting the likelihood of an outcome (e.g., presence or absence) based on a set of independent variables (predictors). In this study, the SPSS13 binary logistic regression procedure is used to identify the characteristic features of families which have a concordant discursive relationship, as opposed to those which do not (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001:517, 519; Norusis 2003:321; George and Mallery 2001:306). The lower quartile – discordance – of the global Concordance Scale is used as the reference category ('0'), against which the upper quartile ('1') – concordance – is contrasted.

All calculations are based upon respondents who indicated there was a married spouse in the home (Select If: dvpart = 1), and have been weighted accordingly. With the inclusion of 24 independents, the regression analysis meets with the "rule of 10" for minimum sample size ($235/24 = 9.8$). That is, 10 is the minimum number of cases present for the outcome with the fewest cases (Hosmer and Lemeshow 2000:346-347). Preliminary analysis excluded six independents (l4, childwb7, dvc24r, rpineo, dvc26r, l26ar). Based on the data available within GSS10, the logistic regression procedure included 576 cases for analysis.

Using stepwise backward elimination, the 24 predictor variables were entered in one block. Four categorical (dummy) predictors were used: sex (dumsexm), remain married for the sake of the child(ren) (k33r), satisfied with main activity (l26ar), and satisfied with balance between work/family/home (l26br). Stepwise backward elimination regression analysis begins with all predictors (in the model) and then removes the independent variable which contributes the least to the regression equation. The elimination process stops when only those variables remain which are statistically significant (Agresti 2002: 214; Wright 1996:240). Since all (block) predictors are in the model to begin with, backward elimination is

more likely to identify hidden (e.g., suppressor) effects. An effect may become significant when other independents are controlled (Menard 2002:64).

Table 4.3 presents the coefficient (β), standard error (SE) and odds ratio ($\text{EXP}(\beta)$) for each predictor in the model. Since the aim of this analysis is to develop a profile of families which engage in concordant discursive practices, the regression coefficients are not discussed. The odds ratio ($\text{EXP}(\beta)$), the ratio of the odds that a case is equal to '1' (concordance) to the odds that it is '0' (non-concordance), is used to assess the importance of each explanatory variable.

Before discussing the odds ratios, four summary comments about the overall fit of the model are important to note. First, logistic regression analysis identified thirteen independents which reliably predict the outcome, a concordant relationship. Second, Nagelkerke's R^2 , a measure of the strength of relationship between the explanatory variables and the dependent variable, indicates that the full model (all 13 predictors) explains 30.5% of the variance. Norusis (2003) points out that summary measurements such as these are often smaller than would be obtained through linear regression analysis (334). Third, the Hosmer-Lemeshow goodness of fit test for evaluating the correspondence between observed and predicted values was not significant, indicating the model is a good fit (for the data). Fourth, the relative accuracy of the final model (all 13 predictors) for predicting group membership is 72.1%, meaning that this model will be correct about three out of every four times. It is, however, an optimistic estimate of model performance because it is calculated from the cases which comprise the model itself (SPSS13.0; Chatterjee et al 2000:329). Using a test sample to check the classification results was not followed here.

4.4.5 DISCUSSION

In this study, the odds ratio estimation represents the likelihood of being in a concordant relationship as opposed to being in a non-concordant relationship, based on a one unit change in the predictor (Tabachnick and Fidell 2001:548). As a measure of association, the relative size of the relationship is determined by its (the odds ratio) difference from one. The further the odds ratio ($\text{EXP}(\beta)$) is from

one, the more influential the predictor on the outcome: an odds ratio greater than 1, more likely to be in a concordant relationship; an odds ratio less than 1, less likely to be in one. If an independent variable's odds ratio is equal to one, then there is no relationship between the dependent and independent variable. The odds are the same for being in a concordant relationship as for being in a non-concordant relationship. An odds ratio greater than one indicates the increase in odds of the dependent variable with each one unit change in the independent variable. An odds ratio less than one shows a decrease in the odds of being in a concordant relationship as the predictor increases. Percentages can be computed by subtracting one and by multiplying by 100 ($\% \text{ change} = (\text{odds ratio} - 1)100$) (Pampel 2000:22-23, 35ff; Menard 2002:56).

The odds ratios in Table 4.3 are unstandardized (e.g., predictors are measured differently) and cannot be compared to one another in terms of their contribution to the dependent variable. Not including the constant, the relative strength of each predictor's contribution to the model is summarized, considering all other independents within the model. Beginning at the top of the list of predictors in Table 4.3, and working down the odds ratio ($\text{Exp}(\beta)$) column, a distinct profile begins to emerge.

- For each one unit change in household size, the odds of having a concordant relationship decreases by 21%. Concordance decreases as household size increases.
- A one unit increase in the hours worked by the respondent results in a 21% increase in the odds of being in a concordant relationship. The odds of concordance increase as the respondent's number of hours worked increases.
- As a respondent's spouse's level of education increases, the odds of being in a concordant relationship decreases by about 9% (per unit increase).
- Men are 42% less likely to consider their relationship with their spouse to be concordant than are women. The odds of a man being in a concordant relationship is .58 times less than the odds of a woman being in one.
- The odds of being in a concordant relationship increases by 87% for each unit increase in age (one unit equals ten years). The older you are the more likely you are to assess your relationship as discursively concordant.

TABLE 4.3 LOGISTIC REGRESSION PREDICTING CONCORDANT RELATIONSHIPS

Predictors		β	SE	Exp(β)
1. Household Size (One through seven plus)	(hhsizcap)	-.239 *	.093	.788
2. Household Income (12 categories)	(dvr54)			
3. Hours worked last week by respondent (7 categories for 1 – 61+ hrs)	(hrsresp1)	.190	.098	1.209
4. Hours worked last week by spouse (7 categories for 1 – 61+ hrs)	(hrsspou1)			
5. Respondent's level of education (10 categories, excluding other)	(redresp)			
6. Spouse's level of education (10 categories, excluding other)	(redspous)	-.091 *	.036	.913
7. Respondent's Sex (female = 1, male = 2)	(dumsexm(1))	-.542 *	.235	.582
8. Respondent's Age (7 categories for age 1 thru 60 plus)	(dv10ag15)	.624 ***	.109	1.867
9. Hours spent doing unpaid housework (6 categories, 0 through 60 plus)	(l2)	-.203	.110	.817
10. Hours spent looking after children (6 categories, 0 through 60 plus)	(l3)			
11. Health status compared to people same age (5 categories, poor through excellent)	(health1)	.252 *	.117	1.286
12. Respondent has stressful life (4 categories, very through not at all)	(stress1)	.704 ***	.146	2.022
13. Having a job best way for a woman to be independent (SD, D, A, SA)	(dvc18r)	-.531 ***	.141	.588
14. Keeping house is as fulfilling as working (SD, D, A, SA)	(dvc19r)			
15. Both a man and woman should contribute to household income (SD, D, A, SA)	(dvc20r)			
16. (Job okay, but) most women really want a home and children (SD, D, A, SA)	(dvc22r)	-.361 *	.166	.697
17. Raising children not a man's responsibility (SD, D, A, SA)	(dvc25r)			
18. Respondent would remain married for sake of children (no -1, yes -2)	(k33r(1))	.492 *	.216	1.636
19. Satisfied with balance between job/family/home (Dissatisfied – 1, Satisfied – 2)	(l26br(1))	.609 *	.311	1.839
20. Importance of being able to take a paying job (4 categories, not at all through very)	(c11r)			
21. Frequency of religious attendance (Last 12 months; 5 categories, not at all through weekly)	(relatt1)			
22. Familism Scale (Family values)	(famism7)	.236 ***	.065	1.266
23. Respondent's Childhood Experience Scale	(chexpsc7)			
24. Family-Work Tension Scale	(famwkt7)			
Constant	(Constant)	-4.078	1.331	.017

NOTE: 1. hrsresp1 (hours worked by respondent) $p = .054$; l2 (time spent doing housework) $p = .086$; * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$
2. All 24 independents were entered in one block
3. Preliminary analysis excluded six independents: l4 - time spent caring for seniors; childwb7 - scale for child wellbeing; dvc24r - what men want most is to be successful at work; rpineo - occupational classification; dvc25r - man's role is to bring enough money home; l26ar - satisfaction with main activity
4. SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree
5. Table 4.3 presents the coefficients, standard errors and odds ratios for all predictors in the final model

- The more hours spent doing housework, the lower the odds of being in a concordant relationship. For each unit increase in housework, the odds of having a concordant relationship are 18% less likely.
- Better ratings of health increase the odds of concordance by 29% (per unit change).
- A one unit decrease in the level of stress results in a 102% (2.022) increase in the odds of being in a concordant relationship. The odds of concordance increase as the respondent's levels of stress decrease.
- Believing that the best way for a woman to be independent is by having a job decreases the odds of being in the dependent variable by 41% (for each unit increase).
- Holding that (while a job is okay) most women really want a home and children lowers the odds of being in a concordant relationship by 30% (per unit change).
- And, holding that you would remain married for the sake of the children means that you are 64% (1.636) more likely to be in the concordant group.
- The odds of being in a concordant relationship increase by about 1.8 times (1.839) with each unit increase of satisfaction with the balance between job,

family and home (compared with those who are not). Satisfaction with family-work balance increases the odds of concordance by 84%.

- The stronger the family values, the greater the odds of being in the dependent variable, a concordant relationship. For each unit change, the odds are increased by 27%.

When controlling for other independents within the model, several predictors result in (much) greater odds of being in a concordant relationship: increasing hours worked by respondent; increasing age; a better assessment of personal health; lower levels of stress; satisfaction with family-job balance; belief in the importance of family values such as being married, having children, having lasting relationship (Familism scale), and remaining married for the sake of the children. By contrast, a number of predictors seem to mitigate against belonging to the outcome: for instance, larger household size, higher levels of spouses' education, more time spent doing housework. Holding certain attitudes also decreases the odds of concordance. For example, you are less likely to be in a concordant relationship if you believe that a woman needs to be working to be independent and that while a job is okay most women really want a home and family. Furthermore, compared to women, men are less likely to have a concordant relationship.

4.4.6 COMMENTS

A basic premise underlying this analysis is that a Habermasian perspective on family holds significant potential for explicating the contemporary realities of family life. Several variables available within the General Social Survey Cycle 10 on family relating to talk, argument, laughter and happiness, are relevant empirical referents (indicators) for operationalizing democratic discursive practices within Canadian families. From a Habermasian perspective, a discursively concordant relationship is the basic requisite necessary for spouses to establish an emancipated family life-project. Concordance requires the sufficient satisfaction of several basic pragmatic presuppositions: the equal participation and consideration of everyone in decision making processes; the absence of force or influence; and the pursuit of the best reason(s) for an agreement. Couples must therefore be interactively competent. And, they must practice empathy and concern for others.

Furthermore, in order to establish a stable, consensual and legitimate family life-project, a “reasonably functional” family (1993:114), solidarity and justice must complement each other.

Obviously, secondary data analysis limits the operationalization of a Habermasian conceptual framework of family life. Nevertheless, a distinct profile of families with discursively concordant relationships emerges within the Data Analysis and Discussion sections above. Several observations regarding these findings are presented below.

First, and of particular interest, logistic regression analysis indicates that men are less likely than women to be in concordant relationships. However, articulating and assessing a Habermasian perspective on family and family change is complicated by his inattention to gender issues underlying marital relationships. On the one hand, Habermas’ conception of the development of gender roles and gender inequality is not fully articulated in respect to the current context. For instance, given the epochal changes in family structure and his interest in emancipation, perhaps Habermas should update his discussion of the historical attribution of differentiated sex roles: women’s responsibilities being centered in the home, and men’s responsibilities being centered outside the home (1987:159). As well, he gives only passing comment to ongoing patterns of gender inequality: for example, feminism’s concern with the “emancipation of women” as involving both “eliminating male privilege” and “overturning concrete forms of life marked by male monopolies” (1987:393). And, he only briefly mentions the “historical legacy of the sexual division of labour” in the home (1987:393).

On the other hand, Habermas suggests that, in comparison to men, women’s continued “subjugation” within family has provided them with “contrasting virtues” and “complementary” values, which are in opposition to “a one-sidedly rationalized everyday practice” (1987c:393-394). Once again, he fails to explain the extent to which women’s and men’s virtues and values differ, or to address the implications of women’s participation in system, in functionally integrated action contexts such as employment – within “the male world” (1987c:394). If this difference in virtues

and values originates with the sexual division of labour in the home (as his statements imply), then several questions arise. What are the implications of differing values for women's participation in the labour force, for the egalitarian sharing of household labour and childcare, for the increasing diversity in family form, or for the discursive development of emancipated relationships? Since he considers the communicative production of new forms of solidarity critically important in providing a check against the subsystem intrusion into lifeworld spheres of everyday action (see discussions of Figure 2.6, Figure 3.1 and Figure 4.1), since he appears to conceptualize women's virtues and values as potential resources for countering functional imperatives, and since he draws a close interconnection between family and society, Habermas' failure to address these issues is significant.

Second, the results of this research indicate that respondents who engage in democratic discursive processes tend to hold values which reinforce a common family project. Concordance is more likely when individuals hold fast to family values such as having a lasting relationship, being married and having children. However, on the one hand, as household size increases, as would be the case with the birth of children, the odds of concordance decreases. While having children is highly valued, increasing family size can create discordant pressures on the relational dynamic between wives and husbands. And, as time spent upon housework increases, the likelihood of concordance also decreases. Increasing family size would certainly increase the need for more housework. On the other hand, as family members age, their relationships are more likely to be concordant. Aging does tend to provide a wealth of everyday learning experiences and knowledge from which to draw upon for organizing everyday life and for problem solving. Aging also means that family size will decrease over time.

Third, believing it is important to remain married for the sake of the children is another aspect of family values which increases the likelihood of concordance. Valuations of this sort can be Janus faced. On the one hand, there is an underlying commitment to maintaining the family project, hopefully by working through problems discursively and consensually. On the other hand, debilitating conflicts

may remain unresolved, thereby distorting everyday communicative practices and limiting a common family life-project. One very real consequence would be increased levels of stress. Another more serious problem is the potential for violence.

Fourth, yet another dimension of family values concerns beliefs about women's gender roles. For the respondents in this analysis, issues surrounding men's gender roles do not appear to be significant. However, views about women's roles reflect, in part, an ongoing struggle involving traditional and emancipated beliefs. On one side, those who believe that the best way for women to be independent is to have a job are less likely to have a concordant relationship. In this case, there seems to be an assumption that participation within the marketplace will not necessarily bring independence. On the other side, those who believe most women really want a home and children are also less likely to be in the outcome group, concordance. Here, the assumption is that women's desires are not (primarily) bound to home and children. There appears to be an ongoing struggle between contrasting beliefs: a more traditional position regarding independence; and a more emancipated position concerning basic desires.

Fifth, both lower levels of stress and better personal health (self-assessment) result in an increased likelihood of having a concordant relationship. Obviously, the challenge of raising children, providing for everyday material needs, maintaining marital relationships and struggling with financial problems can produce stress. Even health issues can accentuate stress; and, vice versa, stress can generate health problems. Sixth, as a spouse's level of education increases there is a decreased likelihood – albeit marginal – of being in the concordant group. Higher levels of education can lead to better employment options, to higher wages and to greater financial independence (individual and familial).

Seventh, two predictors characterize the interconnection of family and economy. (a) As the number of hours spent in employment by a respondent increases, the odds of being in a concordant discursive relationship increases. Working longer hours may bring greater financial security, enabling individuals and

couples to meet their material and recreational needs and desires. (b) Satisfaction with the balance between job/family/home also increases the odds of being in a concordant relationship. Although consistent with Habermas' notion of non-pathological and non-colonized communicative practices, whether married couples represented by this data are discursively resolving the demands of work needs to be studied in future research. Satisfaction with work/family/home balance points in this direction.

The analysis of concordant discursive relationships within Canadian families through the GSS10 appears to reflect an ongoing struggle to establish and maintain a common family project. The family profile for relational concordance, however, has a more traditional nature: for example, strong family values are important. The profile is also characterized by a tension over women's gender roles. Obviously, parsing familial characteristics through discursive concordance requires further research.

4.5 CONCLUSION

Habermas' theory of lifeworld rationalization suggests that everyday life-practices have become subject to a discursive decision making process. Although individuals remain embedded within particular socio-cultural and historical contexts, their biographic and life-plan decisions have become open and changeable, as have collective forms of life. While the traditional normative bundling of life-experience (family, marital partner, career) has unraveled, everyday communicative practices have a productive capacity for establishing new normative patterns. Discourse can generate new bonds of solidarity as old ones dissolve (1997:154). Non-linguistic media (money, power) relieve the pressure on everyday language – driven by increasing individual autonomy and pluralism (e.g., 2001:82, 87, 155-156) – for coordinating interactions. Habermas describes modern social relations in terms of his lifeworld-system interchange model, in which actions are coordinated via “lifeworlds” or “networks” (2001c:82), that is, by social integration through reaching understanding and by functional integration through money and power, respectively. The balance between these modes of action coordination determines the potential

for discursively generating an emancipated form of life. This is the central dilemma we face today: how do we balance the available resources for action coordination (solidarity and money and power) so that emancipated forms of life can take shape?

Habermas' response is radical democracy (1997:92). He argues that the development of convictions and opinions concerning common everyday needs and concerns through critical debate in public spaces must be able to speak to society wide problems and issues. Markets, for instance, are sensitive only to "the language of price", on the one hand, and selectively discriminate who participates and who profits, on the other (2001c:95). System (e.g., economy) is not sensitive to its lifeworld ("external") effects (2001c:155). Moral costs are not directly translatable into price. Consequently, the continued expansion and intensification of systemic (economic and administrative) networks will not bring about just forms of life. Participants themselves must consensually decide the nature of their life-experience, either in family or in global society.

Our everyday communicative sociations have a reproductive and a productive capacity. Communicative sociation routinely reproduces our background assumptions when we tacitly accept them without question. But our communicative practices can also generate new forms of solidarity as old ones dissolve (e.g., marriage and remarriage). In modern complex societies, the rational potential for reaching consensus has become empirically effective for coordinating interactions and resolving conflict. Habermas' theory of lifeworld rationalization posits social integration as the comprehensive foundation for understanding social action, social order and social change. According to the social action – social order – social change dynamic underlying his critical theory of society, everyday communicative sociation fosters emancipatory learning processes.

Habermas contends that the social conditions (public space for critical debate) and normative contents (pragmatic presuppositions of argumentation) can be used as a "critical standard" for assessing "actual" discursive practices (1996b:5). He uses this standard to critically analyze the emancipatory potential within social modernization. He concludes that friendly forms of coexistence are achievable

through radical democratic practices oriented toward moral-practical problem solving. In spite of notable differences between public and private (family) spheres (discursive practice, level of abstraction, inclusivity, nature of solidaric relations), the same standard appears apropos within both social spaces.

Public sphere (a) and family (private sphere) (b) are two core social contexts in which the rational potential of ordinary language has been loosened from ascribed value orientations, traditional normative expectations and standardized life-plans (e.g., 1987c:403). The communicative practices and solidaric relations within these spheres of social life are both fundamentally important for social change. Understanding the two spheres discursively shows they are differentiated primarily by their conditions of communication, publicity and privacy.

(a) The Public Sphere. Within a decentered society, the public sphere, or more specifically the political public sphere, becomes a social “arena” for debating and refining issues and problems and for developing (moral-practical) solutions concerning society wide problems (1996b:301; 1992a:446; 1997:144). Habermas suggests that the public sphere can be understood as a measure or “yardstick” of a society’s “political civilization” (1997:165 also 1996b:485). In modern complex democratic societies, the “authority of a position taking public” takes shape within the “decentered and porous structures” of a political public sphere (1997:144). Thus, the central lifeworld resource, solidarity, is produced and reproduced through citizens’ “political participation” (2001c:76).

When privately experienced problems become public conflicts about which everyone agrees, those problems become moralized, politically relevant and changeable. A vibrant political public sphere, for example, can influence system by moralizing policy discussions, parliamentary debates and legislative outcomes (e.g., programs, laws), and transnational treaties and agreements (e.g., Kyoto Protocol). However, because moral discourse cannot speak directly to systemic networks which are functionally integrated, lifeworld influence must be translated into legal code, which can provide governance over legitimately ordered spheres of action (1996:110; 1998a:252). For example, the Kyoto Protocol binds signatories (e.g.

national governments) to formally accept or ratify their intent to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Civic solidarity depends upon the realization, within public spheres, of an “unimpaired intersubjectivity” (e.g., relations of symmetry and reciprocity) (1997:143). Without justice (e.g., inclusivity and impartiality), desolidarization – the dissolution of social cohesion and stability through the isolation of individuals from each other – can limit the moral capacity of politics to address society wide (or global) problems. When groups of citizens are marginalized and they cannot participate or give voice to their needs and concerns within a public forum, society’s capacity for a radical (universalistic) democratic practice is jeopardized, as is the potential for developing an emancipated form of life.

(b) The Private Sphere, Family. Since lifeworld’s private sphere is a social space where social integration through reaching understanding is both expected and necessary, family is capable of meeting a variety of everyday challenges and needs. And, since all aspects of family life are in principle open to discussion, family structure does not come with prepackaged functional specifications. Of course, certain normative practices may command historical and cultural predominance (e.g., heterosexual marriage). Still, the relative importance of even a halfway normal or functional family is corroborated by its routine discursive accomplishments, including: identity formation (children) and management (adults); cultivation of interactive competence; regulation of everyday practices for achieving goals; and everyday problem solving (2001b). As well, the productive capacity of democratic discourse within family is foundational for developing the sensitivities and capabilities necessary for meeting and addressing moral-practical demands typical of living in complex and pluralistic forms of life. All of these accomplishments emphasize the importance of living in a reasonably functional family (1993:114; 1997:73, 86).

Even though traditional responsibilities associated with family have been hollowed out (e.g., economic production, protection, education, life-management; 1991b:151ff, 247) and even though family appears to have lost its functional status

as “the primary agency of society” (1991b:156, 157), family is more than a voluntary relationship, a community of love and a refuge from the vagaries of employment. Family life-experience continues to be foundational for developing the necessary intersubjective competence (e.g., autonomous and responsible citizens) for moral-practical insight and action. The continued centrality of the interconnection between family and society is evident within processes of social individuation (socialization and individuation). We first learn accountability and practice reaching understanding within family discourse.

Social individuation cultivates identities capable of both autonomous decisions and actions and sensitivity to solidary embeddedness. We become individuated as we grow into the communication community of family. Through our discursive embeddedness within an “intersubjectively shared lifeworld” (1989-90:46) we become conscious of our individual uniqueness and our vulnerability. Greater individuation means greater dependence upon others. And, the more entangled we become within dense networks of reciprocal dependence, the more vulnerable we become. The dependency structure underlying identity formation through individuation demonstrates two things: the need to protect both individual and collective identity; and the necessity of both solidarity and justice. On the one hand, individuals’ fragile identities can be stabilized “only mutually and simultaneously” with the identity of their family (“group”)(1989-90:46).

On the other hand, since identity formation requires “intact relationships of mutual recognition”, solidarity must be complemented by justice (“equal treatment”) (1989-90:46). Everyone must assume responsibility for the integrity of a shared life-context since everyone shares the same common goals and vulnerability (e.g., egalitarian universalism). Each person considers “every other person [to be] one of us”. And, each person expects “to be treated equally” (1998a:29, 40; 2003d:266). The internal relation between solidarity and justice demonstrates the democratic relational dynamic underlying everyday communicative sociation: for ethical discourse (the good); and for moral discourse (the just).

It appears that the social conditions and the normative contents necessary for everyday discursive practices in the public sphere (1996b:5) provide a reasonable yardstick for assessing the emancipatory potential in family as well. Family members who engage in reaching understanding discursively must practice certain idealizations (inclusive, open to all contributions, public, non-coercive). And, when the social conditions for communicative sociation are disturbed (e.g., women's exclusion from participation) the presuppositions for reaching consensus will be distorted. Exclusion can lead to a loss of solidarity, and the eventual dissolution of a family project. Emancipation therefore requires halfway functional or normal social conditions.

An emancipated family form would be voluntary, communicative and democratic. Emancipation brings more independence, but not necessarily more happiness (1994b:107). Although Habermas' discourse theory and theory of lifeworld rationalization is concerned primarily with higher levels of intersubjectivity, radical democratic practices and the public sphere, there are direct implications for family life-experience. Family members have the resources for consensually meeting needs, coordinating life-goals, establishing common life-projects, resolving problems, and renewing and renegotiating solidary relations. In practice, Habermas argues, family has undergone a structural transformation: responsible family members, consensual egalitarian relationships, and liberated socialization practices (1987c:387).

Traditional life-experience (e.g., marital partner, career) has become open to change. Nevertheless, communicative practices tend to be informed, and deformed, by the beliefs and practices historically and culturally available within a particular concrete ethical community. Ethical issues and questions are therefore more central within everyday family communicative practices. The central challenge confronting family members as they cooperatively establish and maintain a common family project is determining what is best for us (as a family), and not what is best for everyone. On the one hand, ideal presuppositions are unavoidable for consensus, in either form of discourse, ethical or moral. On the other hand,

discursively oriented decision making requires relationships characterized by reciprocity and empathy.

Family, the core structural component of lifeworld's private sphere, is not oriented toward publicity and universal inclusion as is the public sphere. Familial relationships are value laden and emotionally mediated. Individuals' strong convictions and feelings regarding their life-histories interconnect within family, through thick networks of communicative sociations. Family members must struggle to coordinate obligations and goals with their everyday survival needs. And, as the family project changes over time (e.g., raising children to empty nest), couples must, whenever possible, establish and maintain an appropriate family-work balance.

The discursive space within a reasonably functional family is ripe with emancipatory potential. Habermas' discourse theory and theory of rationalization places a significant burden upon individuals for coordinating their own interactions autonomously and responsibly. Since we "conduct" our everyday lives according to how we understand ourselves (1998a:27), and since we are socialized into stable identities through relations of equal respect and reciprocal recognition, family life-experience is fundamentally important for developing our ethical and moral capacities.

Family is an originary public of communication through which socialized and individuated members develop and hone the requisite communicative competence and empathetic sensitivities required for moral-practical insight and decision making. Solidarity however cannot be commanded, forced or permanently repositied. It must be discursively produced and reproduced. Stable and civilized forms of solidarity can be generated through a democratic process of consensus formation. While those near are expected to be dear, or to have priority, obligations concerning care and commitment cannot be determinately fixed. Because family obligations are traditionally ascribed, they do tend to become substantive scripts (e.g., homemaker and breadwinner role). Nevertheless, these obligations remain open to discursive determination. The rational capacity of our everyday

communicative practices opens family life-projects to solidaric choices, and to social change.

A Habermasian conceptual framework allows for the development of a profile of Canadian families which engage in emancipatory discursive practices. Logistic regression was used to identify the characteristic features of contemporary Canadian married couples who engage in democratic discourse, compared to those which do not. Couples who calmly discuss matters, laugh together, argue less frequently and feel satisfied (happy) with their partners have concordant relationships. Discursive concordance is the basic requisite necessary for establishing emancipated family relationships. Concordance means that family members have sufficiently met the pragmatic presuppositions necessary for reaching understanding.

Based on the available data, my exploratory research provides prima facie support for a Habermasian approach to understanding democratic discursive practices and social change. Couples appear to be working out their common life-project. This discursive struggle involves a complex mixture of behaviors, values and attitudes. Since my data analysis indicates that concordance is more likely associated with strong family values, further research is needed concerning issues such as democratic discourse, solidarity, gender and gender roles, family values and family-work relationships. A Habermasian model of social change suggests that gender role beliefs, values and personal preferences are open to debate and change. Even the imbalance of resources (e.g., solidarity versus money and power) within the lifeworld-system interchange is amendable.

Communicative practices oriented toward emancipation have life altering implications, no matter the social context – global society, nation-state, community or family. The social action – social order – social change dynamic underlying Habermas' theory of discourse is not limited to the public sphere. Within concrete social spaces such as family, the voice of reason is mediated by the pragmatics of ethical considerations, in particular by the self-understanding of individual family

members as they discursively orient themselves towards establishing and achieving a common, cooperative and peaceful family-life-project.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION AND THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The abstract, complex, open and contiguous nature of social modernization places a tremendous theoretical burden upon Sociology and its concern with social interaction. As social beings, we use and transform knowledge, orient action(s) responsibly and use language to resolve problems. Social life is therefore communicative in nature. We communicate with others in order to meet our everyday emotional and physical needs, to pursue our personal preferences, to pattern our lives in accordance with our cherished values, and to live peacefully with others. As has been argued, Jurgen Habermas' critical social theory provides a discursive lens through which to better understand and assess the nuances and ambiguities of everyday social interaction, in all dimensions.

5.2 A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

5.2.1 OVERVIEW

Several basic questions which have traditionally guided a sociological interest in social interaction were identified earlier. First, how do individuals coordinate their interactions with others? And, by extension, how can we explain the individual – society relationship? Second, how is social order possible? And third, how can sociological theory account for social change? Accounting for social change raises a related, pragmatic question. How are friendly forms of coexistence, such as a well-ordered society and a democratic familial relationship, possible? Each of the three guiding questions is centered on a primary focal theme: action, order and

change. The three focal themes (action, order, change) represent core concepts within a sociological perspective concerned with the study of social life in general, and with the analysis and critique of the full range of elemental and complex forms of social interaction in particular.

Given the significance of these themes within Sociology, social action, social order and social change have been used to explore modern social life in terms of Habermas' critical social theory. In respect to the central thesis of this research, Habermas' critical social theory appears to provide a coherent, communicative foundation for studying the modern social dynamic. A communicatively oriented approach to social interaction renders the social action – social order – social change framework as interconnected and dynamic. Analytically, the action – order – change framework becomes a social dynamic (Figure 1.1). And, since all social interaction is historically and empirically situated within forms of life characterized by specific cultural traditions, normative expectations and socialization practices, a communicative approach can highlight action coordinating and socially integrating conditions, mechanisms, problems and prospects within and across social time and space.

Accordingly, a Habermasian approach to everyday communicative sociation achieves three purposes. First, consensually oriented communicative sociation provides a normative foundation for establishing emancipated forms of life (familial, societal, and global). Second, Habermasian theory interconnects family with larger social formations: for example with (global) society. And third, it points to several empirical referents which characterize concordant discursive practices in Canadian families. Observations about the latter two purposes will develop as the discussion of the first purpose progresses. Before summarizing Chapters 2, 3 and 4, a few preliminary comments are necessary.

5.2.2 COMMENTS

Using the analysis of Habermas' theory of communicative action and discourse theory as a backdrop, we can make several general observations about the communicative nature of everyday social life. First, we are rational beings –

capable of judgement and open to reasoning – who must cooperate communicatively in order to survive. In other words, our social nature is inherently communicative. Second, communicative interaction (reaching understanding and agreement) is the fundamental form of social action, from which all other forms are derived. Reaching understanding (better reason) and strategic action (coercion, influence) are mutually exclusive. Reasoned consensus cannot be forced, by threat, intimidation or deception. On the one hand, communicative interaction interconnects everyday needs, issues and problems with action through discursive understanding. On the other hand, communicative interaction requires the help of an other or others, through the acceptance of a plan of action(s) and through the obligation for continued future interaction(s). Even under conditions of social modernization, our communicative actions are sufficient for explaining the ambiguous nature of modern social life. Reaching understanding and agreement within communicative interaction can be emancipatory.

Third, reaching consensus (understanding) is a risky mechanism for linking interactions. Not everything can, or should, be rationally discussed or debated. And, not everyone can or will participate. Therefore, non-linguistic means (money, power) of coordinating interactions have developed to relieve the everyday communicative practices of reaching understanding. Fourth, the modern social dynamic therefore is conditioned by the interplay of different and often competing forms of action coordinating mechanisms (solidarity and money and power). Consequently, these mechanisms need to be balanced so that our communicative actions can bring moral governance to autonomous and functionally integrated systems of interaction. Furthermore, democratic discursive practices in everyday relationships (e.g., marriage) should be able to resolve, fairly and legitimately, power differentials and inequalities.

Fifth, the communicative infrastructure of the modern social dynamic holds promise for establishing non-oppressive, friendly forms of coexistence. Without yielding our present or future life-circumstances to fate or force, how else can we make sense of our intersubjective life-experiences, or bring individual and collective

action to bear against oppression, injustice and inequality (and establish friendly forms of coexistence)? There is no functional equivalent to language oriented to reaching understanding.

Sixth, since diverse value configurations hold different truth values as incontestable and unalterable, friendly forms of coexistence which respect others' differences are only possible through solidary relations which are, concomitantly, just. Even democratic communicative familial relationships, which are grounded in reasoned discussion and decision making, require empathy and respect equally. Non-distorted forms of life and not-misspent life-trajectories are only possible through an intersubjectivity characterized by "symmetrical relations marked by free, reciprocal recognition" (1992b:145). And so, both collective and individual identities are inherently vulnerable. The social face of emancipated relationships is contoured by both solidarity and justice.

Seventh, reaching a consensus with others about something has normative prerequisites (pragmatic presuppositions): complete inclusivity, equal consideration of all contributions, freedom from coercion and openness to the better argument. Without sufficiently fulfilling the normative demand for these ideal presuppositions, the cooperative and consensual basis for reaching agreement, and for achieving not-misspent life-trajectories or non-distorted life-forms, becomes severely restricted. Rightly so, Habermas cautions that these normative conditions are formal and not utopian. They are procedurally necessary for legitimate discursive outcomes about which everyone agrees. And, they are the rational basis of our communicative action, of reaching understanding and agreement. They allow the voice of reason to speak to everyday needs and to societal (and global) problems.

Eighth, the rational use of language enables learning. When we use language for reaching understanding and agreement, we engage in a recursive learning process. Each new understanding and agreement becomes a resource accessible for use in future discourse, and so on, even for future generations. We can, therefore, learn from mistakes, from contingencies, from different experiences, and from dissonant value perspectives. The latter is especially important within a

global world of modern multicultural societies. Ninth, although ethical and moral discourse differ in terms of inclusivity and embeddedness, they share one important common feature. They both involve argumentative discourse in which good reasons predominate, in which the necessary pragmatic presuppositions must be sufficiently met, and in which autonomous participants must take positions and make decisions. Both discursive practices are therefore rational.

Finally, by orienting sociological analysis to democratic communicative sociation, we can become sensitized to the paradoxical nature of the modern social dynamic and to the interdependence of solidarity and justice for establishing friendly forms of coexistence. Through sensitization, we hope, with Habermas, that we also will become oriented in our action. In other words, awareness and understanding – especially moral sensitivity to human rights – should bring purpose and direction.

These comments direct attention back to the central argument. Jurgen Habermas' social philosophy provides a coherent theoretical framework for understanding the communicative foundation of the social dynamic, or, of the social action – social order – social change dynamic. A Habermasian approach to each of the three orienting questions and their focal themes supports this contention.

5.2.3 CHAPTER SUMMARIES

5.2.3.1 CHAPTER TWO: COMMUNICATIVE SOCIATION AND SOCIAL ACTION

Chapter Two examined the problem of how social interaction – between intimates and among strangers – is interlaced within social space and social time. Habermas addresses the issue of action coordination (linking up interactions) within his theory of speech acts and theory of communicative action. He argues that we have the normative resources for coordinating our interactions through the everyday practice of reaching understanding and agreement. In order to reach consensus, we must sufficiently fulfill several ideal presuppositions: inclusion of everyone, openness to all arguments and positions, absence of force, and acceptance of better reason(s). Acceptance means that participants assume obligations for continuing interaction: promises must be kept; commands must be followed;

assertions must guide behavior. Communicative interaction leading to consensus, of course, requires autonomous and responsible actors capable of forming opinions and making decisions publicly. We become responsible and autonomous through everyday communicative sociation, especially within family.

Engaging and satisfying the pragmatic presuppositions allows the voice of reason to resonate within everyday communicative sociations. The voice of reason enables peaceful coexistence through rational outcomes which are legitimate, binding and consensual. The modern social dynamic has the normative resources to bring democratic governance to all social interactions within all forms of social life. It is, however, a potential which can only be realized within and through actual discursive practices, regardless of our strong ethical connections and value convictions.

Habermas presents the social dynamic (action – order – change) in terms of a struggle between communicative and functional mechanisms for coordinating interactions. Communicatively produced solidarity is the action coordinating mechanism through which everyday needs and concerns become a source of influence within abstract, functionally integrated networks of bureaucracy and exchange. A moral voice can speak to elemental and to abstract social needs, concerns and problems through a communicatively produced consensus, especially within democratic political orders. Morality (and law) is concerned with protecting both individual dignity through equal respect (e.g., justice), and relationships of mutual recognition which foster and support identity formation (e.g., solidarity). In terms of the action – order – change dynamic, reaching understanding and agreement with others requires equal respect, as well as empathy and concern.

Thus, individuals are connected to larger social formations through their everyday discursive practices. Individuals are sociated – become products – and individuated – become producers – at once. While we are socialized into a form of life, we also routinely reproduce (communicative action) and actively change (argumentation) our life-circumstances. However, it would be reductionistic to limit a Habermasian analysis of the social dynamic to the individual – society

relationship. Doing so could result in a narrow, bounded and uncritical cultural perspective: for example, ethnocentrism, Eurocentrism or Occidentalism. Of course, as a dimension of social life, the individual-society relationship is of empirical interest. Yet, the relationship is not static or oppositional; it is dynamic, interactive and complex.

Within a discursive approach to reaching understanding, the individual and society are only two of three critical resources available within communicative interactions. Habermas constructs a model of intermeshing lifeworld components in which three communicative resources are reciprocally related: individual (personality, motivations), society (legitimately ordered interpersonal relationships), and culture (meaning structures and acquired knowledge). We do not belong to society, as we would to an organization. And we are not simply carriers of either society or culture. We are socialized (with individuated identities) in as much as we are embedded within solidary relations and institutional contexts, and within cultural traditions and strongly held value orientations. Cooperating with others within a multicultural world demands a perspective which looks beyond our own situatedness, our own beliefs, convictions and preferences. Our everyday communicative practices weave our individual life-projects into the fragile fabric of social life. Just as our intersubjectivity or interconnectedness is inescapable, so too is our dependence and vulnerability.

Moral (and ethical) learning processes, which are foundational for social change, are dependent upon all three lifeworld resources. Learning within discursive practices requires that our lifeworld resources expand and overlap with those of other participants, including strangers. Even though we are embedded in different forms of life, our often contrasting values, norms, motivations and competencies must sufficiently overlap in order for reasoned consensus to occur. After all, we draw our interpretations, explanations and legitimations from these three background resources. And, in the end, these interpretations, explanations and legitimations orient our actions.

Understanding the individual – society – culture relationship as interactive opens the potential for social change. A rational, discursive (reaching understanding) approach to the social action – social order – social change dynamic underlying everyday social life demonstrates the importance of moral governance within Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange model and his model of boundary conflicts. The threat of lifeworld colonization by system need not delimit the communicative capacity for the voice of reason to moralize social problems. We must seek an "acceptable balance" (1997:92) of the available resources (solidarity, money and power). Fortunately, a discursive potential for emancipation inheres within all our communicative sociations. The normative demands (pragmatic presuppositions) underlying consensus formation within moral discourse also structure democratic discursive practices within family.

5.2.3.2 CHAPTER THREE: SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL ORDER

Modern societies are confronted with the problem of social order. Social life must be integrated and regulated under complex conditions: globalization (economic, administrative, cultural), individualization, pluralization, detraditionalization, secularization. Consequently, the possibility for cooperative, peaceful coexistence, or forms of life which are characterized by universal justice and empathetic solidarity, have tremendous appeal. On the one hand, the greater the demand for integration and regulation, the stronger the appeal becomes. On the other hand, the need for justice and solidarity have important normative implications: consensus and cooperation, as opposed to influence, coercion and force. We *can* work out a better way of life through our moral-practical discourse. Social (communicative) action can establish a stable and legitimate political-legal order. Within modern democratic societies, only radical democratic practices which are self-critical and self-determining offer the promise of emancipated and civilized coexistence.

Three essential themes were used to frame Habermas' discourse ethics and discourse theory: impartialness, embeddedness and openness. They represent three basic characteristics of the rational-procedural nature of moral discourse

within the modern social dynamic. **(a) Impartialness.** By focusing on the normative regulation of everyday life, Habermas' discourse ethics (a philosophy of morality) explains and grounds the moral point of view – a procedure (moral-practical argumentation) for rationally addressing problems of social order. Since morality is concerned with the impartiality and universality of legitimate solutions to problems of social regulation, and since the rational-procedural nature of moral-practical discourse facilitates impartial and inclusive outcomes, stable and legitimate forms of social order can be discursively established, maintained and renegotiated.

With social modernization, the normative demand for social order intensified, thereby precipitating the differentiation of law, morality and ethical life. Because law can compensate for moral argumentation's limitations within actual discursive practices, it now functionally complements an autonomous and secular morality. Within Habermas' discourse theory, law, morality and ethical life remain communicatively interconnected. Democratically produced legal rules legitimately regulate social interaction. Therefore obedience is voluntary, but can be forced (e.g., courts) if necessary. Legal orders involve artificial structures – legislature, administration, courts – which are flexible and changeable. In constitutional democracies these institutional structures are also oriented to impartial and rational (reasoned) opinion formation and decision making. As well, since the legality of democratically legislated norms is geographically and politically bounded, the effective extension and moral intention of societal self-determination is conditioned by the impartialness (e.g., inclusivity) of the political system.

Morality and law (and ethical discourse) protect the relational structures – established by ideal presuppositions – of everyday communicative practices. In order to reach agreement within moral discourse, the moral point of view requires participants to fulfill the normative conditions of argumentation (e.g., equal respect and mutual reciprocity). Law transfers the symmetry and reciprocity necessary for elementary discursive practices (communicative action, argumentation) to a higher, more abstract level of organized relationships. Even solidarity and justice are legally mediated at this level of social complexity. Importantly, neither solidarity

(sense of oneness) nor justice (what is equally good for everyone) is preempted or devalued. They are coequals within both moral and legal problem solving.

The moralizing gaze of impartial discursive practices: generates solidary relations oriented to moral-practical problem solving; enables moral learning and social change; converts quasi-natural processes and institutions into social problems with political solutions; creates a social space within which moral life and ethical life become intertwined; and offers the possibility for establishing legitimate, well-ordered relational structures grounded in egalitarian universalism (symmetry and reciprocity). The impartialness of a political community's problem solving and action integrating discursive practices is a measure of its civilized nature. If our civilized nature depends upon impartialness, how then should we view families where symmetry and reciprocity are often not normative (e.g., patriarchal relationships)? Habermas' occasional reference to the importance of 'halfway functional' families only begs the question.

(b) Embeddedness. Embeddedness characterizes the internal connection between morality and ethics. The moral perspective is an ideal extension of the ethical perspective. Inclusivity is universally extended to involve everyone. In both cases, the voice of reason is premised on equal respect and mutual reciprocity (universal egalitarianism). On the one hand, we draw on our background knowledge for moral and ethical decision making. On the other hand, both moral and ethical agreements are fallible; they are changeable as new information, circumstances and problems arise. However, strong ties to our convictions and beliefs – our traditions, our faith communities, our way of life – are not always easily surmountable. While, ultimately, we are not independent of our social world, we tend to experience life as a stream of events which is jarred and jostled by unsettling circumstances. A moral perspective can motivate us to examine more carefully where this flow of life-experience is taking us, and along with us, where it is taking others.

Only under normative conditions of equal respect and solidaristic responsibility (universal egalitarianism) is an ethically neutral conception of justice

possible. We must move beyond evaluative projects of my or our good life and appeal to the better (inclusive) self of the moral community. Since values are intimately tied to specific collectivities they do not represent the 'general' interests of everyone. While values can only recommend behavior, norms regulate behavior. They command it. Moral norms regulate the universal community of moral agents; and, legal norms regulate the universally bounded community of legal agents (citizens). In effect, legitimate norms command action(s) which is in everyone's best interest, or which is "equally good for all" (1996b:256). The rightness of moral judgements is determined by their "rational acceptability" within discourse(s) by all those concerned (the universalization test).

We cannot simply implement morality; we must learn it. And we learn our moral sensibilities within reasonably functional families. Within family, we come to understand and accept ourselves and others as accountable, as well as vulnerable and in need of protection. We are rational beings who are also subject to feelings, emotions and desires. Further, we encounter one another within culturally inscribed spatio-temporal circumstances. Morality, justice and solidarity are moored in variegated life-projects and forms of life. Relativizing strong convictions and emotional loyalties therefore requires the impartialness of unrestricted (ideal presuppositions) discursive practices.

Within modern democratic societies, law (e.g., institutionalization, legal norms) compensates for discursive barriers (e.g., time constraints, motivational deficits) within all forms of discourse. For Habermas, deliberative politics is the moral center of democratic practice. Deliberative politics offers a procedure, borrowed from communicative action's normative content, for reasonable and fair discursive outcomes within political debate and decision making. Deliberative politics meets the universalization test when the concerns, needs and views of ordinary citizens – a peripheral sphere of public opinion – become a source of (moral) influence and motivation within political decision making bodies. At the level of political orders, only society-wide problems and issues become politically relevant concerns.

The political public sphere – a social space for reaching understanding – refines and channels everyday concerns and issues (e.g., opinion-formation) for influence within procedural and rule governed decision making political bodies (e.g., will-formation). Public opinion thereby becomes communicative power. On the one hand, communicative power becomes administrative power when decisions and laws are directly influenced. On the other hand, communicative power can only give direction to administrative power; it cannot govern. Within deliberative politics, democratically achieved public opinion can influence, monitor and program political power. Thus, politics, through positive law, acts as a safety mechanism when social integration is interrupted.

The normative expectations attributed to deliberative democracy (e.g., legitimate, binding and consensual outcomes) can only be achieved through embeddedness. At the very least, deliberative democracy requires an internal connection to a rationalized lifeworld, to citizens who are accustomed to and capable of autonomous and responsible actions. Competence for and ongoing use of communicative freedoms nourishes an emancipatory potential. Everyday life-experiences can become a sounding board for society wide problems. As individuals discuss and debate problems within the (political) public sphere, general interests and opinions take shape. When channeled into parliamentary debates and legislative decisions (laws, programs), the solidaric exercise of public opinion generates a process of reflexive political self-determination.

Communicatively produced solidarity can unite strangers, who wish to regulate their common life together, within a cooperative political project. A robust political public sphere can interconnect morality, law and politics, can open political practices to radical democratic processes, and can enable political learning. In regards to learning, basic moral concepts such as autonomy, human dignity, solidarity and equality must remain open to change. Recursive learning may avoid future Holocausts. However, in order for radical democratic practice to be effective, communicative freedoms must be used.

The capacity to influence and direct political policy and decisions sensitizes governing and administering bodies to everyday needs and concerns. Three measures of this capacity are “individual freedom”, “social security” and “political participation”. The dignity of human life can be measured by these emancipatory tendencies. By extension, how equally these tendencies (pursuit of individual choice and preference, general well being, and equal participation) are shared by husbands and wives also shapes personal dignity, individual and familial identity, and familial solidarity.

(c) Openness. The final feature of practical discourse, openness, emphasizes the fluid, dynamic and productive nature of our everyday communicative practices. Openness characterizes the essential nature of a problem solving and action coordinating deliberative procedure. Habermas’ discourse theory is concerned, in part, with drawing out the inner connections between democratic politics and the rational potential of reaching understanding within our everyday communicative practices. His theory sets high normative demands upon democratic processes of communication and their enveloping legal orders. The normative basis for non-oppressive political communities, for legitimate and stable social order, is a public struggle for democratic self-determination. Within modern political-legal orders, radical democratic self-determination means that individuals must use their political freedom (public debate, vote, protest) to regulate their changing life-conditions. The discursive foundation of radical democracy (e.g., vibrant public sphere, autonomous and responsible citizens) holds great promise for establishing an emancipated form of life.

When society is understood as discursively produced and reproduced, the lifeworld-system interchange model and the boundary conflict model assume a definitive normative dimension. In order for social order to be stable and legitimate, discursive practices and conditions need to produce consensually derived rational results. Within democratic politics two social spaces facilitate these discursive practices: formal parliamentary debate and decision making; and informal communicative networks within the political public sphere. Radical democracy

places high expectations upon the flow of communication between autonomous public spheres and democratic institutions. In effect, members of society have a potential voice in determining their life-circumstances. Where administrative power brings social change through intervention and implementation, the procedural nature (universal inclusion, equal consideration) of deliberative democracy champions communication, consensus and influence.

Within deliberative democracy, problem solving capacities are learning driven and public centered. The demand for stability and legitimacy within modern pluralistic and democratic societies necessitates adaptive (learning) capacities. For solutions to be emancipatory and society to be self-determining, impartial rational deliberative practices must moralize problems of social order. Social orders learn (albeit derivatively from individual learning processes), through changing social boundary conditions (values, norms, institutions, legal system, life-histories). The more rationalized these boundary conditions become (cultural reflexivity, discursively produced solidarity, autonomous and responsible self-direction), the greater the potential for generating emancipated forms of social order. When participants reach an understanding or agreement, their lifeworld horizons, and therefore their lifeworld resources (meanings, expectations, competencies), overlap, entwine and expand. Therefore, the boundary conditions between individuals and society (and culture) shift accordingly. Deliberative democracy's public centeredness is the central focus of what follows.

Law compensates for the limitations that real life-conditions place on coordinating interactions through moral discourse and norms. Empirical limitations can restrict the ideal presuppositions (e.g., inclusion and accessibility) and can inhibit motivations for compliance (e.g., traditional socialization practices). The legal-political nature of the modern democratic state becomes the core of a secularized, rational morality. Because this core is institutionalized within society (parliaments, courts), law enables the rational-procedural nature of morality to become formal (e.g., time limits on debating and voting). Positive law can also produce reasonable outcomes. Compliance with those outcomes can be

sanctioned, if necessary. Thus, through democratic legislation, law becomes a bridge between norm and reality, between legal equality and actual equality. Unlike law, morality cannot enforce either participation or compliance. The positive nature of legal norms enables law to circulate throughout all action spheres, and to establish relations of reciprocity and symmetry between legal subjects.

Because both morality and law are concerned with problems of social order, they serve two key functions. They legitimately order interpersonal relations and consensually resolve conflicts. Both morality and law require autonomous agents who take reasoned positions and make rational decisions. Whereas moral autonomy is derived from the capacity of moral agents to make rational decisions which are binding, legal autonomy consists of citizens' legal self-determination. Unlike moral autonomy, legal autonomy is differentiated into the private pursuit of individual interests and preferences (private autonomy) and the public practice of communicative freedoms (public autonomy). As well, legal persons are autonomous only to the extent they understand themselves as the authors of the laws they voluntarily (and coercively) follow. The addressees of law are also its authors.

Through democratic self-legislation, legal subjects are self-determining. However, within democratic states, the legitimacy of legal orders depends upon the presence of rights guaranteeing legal autonomy: individual rights of private autonomy to develop and pursue personal life-projects; and communicative and participation rights for the public expression of political interests, concerns and needs. Importantly, the civic solidarity which coalesces around the actualization of these rights provides legitimation for legally addressing problems of social integration.

Habermas proffers a proceduralist paradigm of law which explains the necessary conditions for resolving social problems within democratic nation-states. The central political institutions within the state – legislature, administration, courts – must guarantee legal subjects the opportunity to express their political autonomy. Political debates, decisions and programs must be open to influence by a proactive

public of enfranchised (private and public rights) citizens. Private market employees and welfare state clients cannot redress society wide problems. Citizens can moralize social problems through voting and joining political parties to some extent, but also, and more importantly, through the communicative power generated by a robust political public sphere. The influence generating periphery of communicative practices within the public sphere surrounds the political structures at the center of a legal-political order.

Radical democracy therefore emphasizes the periphery – communicative networks within civil society – over the center – political institutions. Consequently, a tremendous normative expectation is placed on the private sphere of family (e.g., socialization of responsible social actors who are morally sensitized) and on the public sphere (e.g., communicative networks facilitated and nurtured by a liberal political culture). When civil society's communicative potential is radically democratized, several significant consequences become especially relevant for western democracies: the depoliticization of administrative bodies; the potential for the economy to be sensitized to external costs (e.g., poverty); a decentered self-understanding which provides opportunities for learning from others, from strangers; and a communicatively produced solidarity which can stand against systemic media as a mechanism for problem solving and social integration.

In modern pluralistic societies, solidarity can only be reproduced through “communicative practices of self-determination” (1996b:445). On the one hand, reasoned action which is oriented to the common good requires individuals to practice more solidarity. On the other hand, the practice of solidarity is conditioned by the availability of discursive and institutional resources. Solidarity between strangers is abstract and legally mediated. Besides a constitutional framework guaranteeing essential private and public rights, preconditions for an abstract civic solidarity include: freely flowing ideas; freedom from coercion; embeddedness within a liberal political culture; support from liberal associational networks within civil society; and the transfer and processing of everyday problematic experiences from

the private sphere (1998a:160). Within most societies, these core conditions are in short supply. Within global society, they are only embryonic.

The openness of deliberative democratic processes, in particular communicative practices within the political public sphere, is premised on egalitarian universalism: mutual inclusion and equal consideration. Since relationships coordinated on the basis of solidaristic responsibility and equal respect tend to be free of “stratification and exploitation”, an egalitarian public can foster true cultural pluralism (1996b:308). Communicatively produced solidarity within an egalitarian public is the foundation for establishing a non-oppressive and non-distorted form of life. Although family relations tend to be morally and pragmatically integrated, where the final court of appeal is moral consciousness, the necessary relations of symmetry and reciprocity for reaching agreement provide the basis for creating a non-distorted family life-project. Solidarity still requires justice, no matter the social frame of reference.

Using impartialness, embeddedness and openness to frame Habermas’ discourse theory of society highlights the importance of a rational-procedural discursive practice for establishing, maintaining and changing social order. Democratic procedure has three strengths: continuous circulation of issues and reasons; deliberative opinion formation and decision making; and reasonable outcomes. Within modern constitutional political-legal orders only radical democracy can generate the solidary relations necessary for balancing systemic mechanisms for integrating interactions. Only a radical form of democracy can moralize society wide problems and sensitize global networks of exchange markets to everyday concerns and needs.

The catalyst for emancipation, Habermas argues, is the unrelenting moral gaze of a vibrant and critical public sphere. The mechanism for establishing a legitimate, consensual and stable social order, is solidarity. However, discursively produced stability is neither quasi-natural nor transcendental; it is a *social* fact which is alterable.

5.2.3.3 CHAPTER FOUR: EMANCIPATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Social life has always been under constant pressure to adjust and adapt. Its complex and pluralistic nature generates enormous normative demands upon our action coordinating and problem solving practices, upon the politics of everyday life. Since we communicate (linguistically) to associate (social action), and since consensual agreement brings cooperative engagement (social order), our everyday discursive practices can become a solidaric force for establishing peaceful and democratic forms of life (social change), in all social arenas. Understanding the modern social dynamic discursively means that social order and social change both issue from social action. Consequently, action coordinating and problem solving capacities have become the engine for social change, and, therefore, the basis for emancipation.

Using a discursive approach to the action – order – change dynamic, Chapter Four examined the emancipatory implications of Habermas' theory of rationalization and discourse theory for the political public sphere and for family within the private sphere. While Habermas acknowledges the importance of the family-public sphere interconnection, he has focused his attention primarily upon radical democratic practices and the public sphere. The relevance of family within his theoretical architectonics has been largely unexplored.

The problem of coordinating and regulating action within the modern social dynamic can be understood in terms of Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange model. According to his theory of rationalization, the central mechanisms for social integration are lifeworld's solidarity and system's money and power. Each one follows a different logic: communicative or discursive (lifeworld), and functional (system). In the former, most importantly, our everyday actions are oriented by our values, norms and motivations. Within our communicative interactions, these resources inform our interpretations and understandings, and therefore guide our decisions and subsequent action(s). Usually, our communicative actions are routine. Discourse interrupts this taken-for-granted process for the purpose of procedurally (ideal presuppositions) and consensually (reaching agreement)

resolving conflicts or meeting needs. Habermas' discourse theory of democracy explicates the moral implications of a rational-procedural discursive practice of consensus formation for establishing, maintaining and changing modern legal-political orders.

The challenge confronting us today is to bring legitimate and effective moral governance to systemic (non-linguistic) networks and processes. Only the solidarity underlying the voice of reason has the potential to moralize and therefore impartially politicize social problems. And, within modern constitutionally ordered states, only radical democracy can produce solidaric relations capable of moral-practical reflection and action. However, solidarity without justice becomes voiceless, and often oppressive. Everyone's interests must be given equal consideration, even within emotionally and normatively laden family relationships. Our communicative sociations are pragmatically effective for generating dependable interpersonal bonds, for both immediate and subsequent interactions.

Communicative mastery of social problems, and therefore moral learning, brings a sense of oneness (solidarity) within shared life-settings. The power of discursive intersubjectivity can (and does) unite both strangers (political public sphere) and intimates (family) in a common, consensual and emancipated life-form or life-project. In both cases reaching a consensus based on the better reason(s) establishes a moral basis for continued interaction. The weak motivational force of good reason(s) gives a moral face to cooperative interaction – friendly forms of societal coexistence, egalitarian (functional) familial relationships. While there are other options of course, only relational structures characterized by equal consideration and empathy for the other(s) can produce impartial and inclusive, and therefore legitimate, discursive (moral) outcomes.

However, in a secularized and multicultural society, moral discourse cannot speak directly to everyone's interests, to society as a whole. It has to be transformed into legal code. Law transfers elemental relations of symmetry and reciprocity (within family) into abstract organized relationships (within a political public sphere). At this level of social interaction, solidarity is legally mediated

through the practice of constitutionally guaranteed rights. Although differentiated by level of abstraction and by purpose or function, both political public sphere and family are premised on solidarity and justice.

From a Habermasian perspective, political public sphere and family are closely linked. First, the same structures of symmetry and reciprocity necessary for reaching understanding and agreement within family are requisite for strangers' cooperative and consensual sociations. Second, we first learn and practice our moral sensibilities within (functional) family. Third, family becomes both a sounding board, where social problems are experienced and discussed, and a recruitment center, for motivated and proactive citizens who are willing and capable of engaging in public debate and opinion formation. The latter point highlights two clear differences between these spheres: the level of publicity or accessibility; and the inclusiveness of the discursive practice.

Even though family ties are bound up with value preferences, normative expectations and emotional impulses, they are discursively produced and reproduced. Problems are discursively resolved. Needs are discursively met. Identities are discursively formed. In other words, family relationships and individual identities are grounded in essential relations of mutual recognition and respect. More discourse means more dependency. And, vulnerability can only be protected through solidaric responsibility (e.g., empathy) for one another. Within family, we experience, learn and practice our moral sensibilities.

Habermas therefore locates the social coordinates for solidarity within intersubjectivity, everyday communicative sociation, and socialization-individuation. On the one hand, we actively choose our solidaric relations (we marry, we join an environmental movement). On the other hand, we expect those who are near to be dear, to have an indeterminate priority that is open and flexible. In order to accommodate different levels of social complexity, Habermas proffers an abstractive model of solidarity. The greater the social distance between actors, the more abstract the relational structures of solidarity. In order to establish solidary relations between strangers, the mutual reciprocity and equal respect underlying

proximal solidarity must become more abstract. In modern constitutional democracies, these relational structures are formalized through legal rights.

Three general levels of solidarity within Habermas' thought were identified: intimate, civic and cosmopolitan. As the level of abstraction increases, the thickness of communicative embeddedness decreases. First, intimate solidarity refers to the intense and dense emotional bonds of oneness within private life-experience such as between family members and between lovers. Intimacy is often infused with strong ethical beliefs, normative evaluations and emotional convictions. These relationships are embedded within and influenced by a particular way of understanding and of organizing social life. Habermas, however, is concerned primarily with civic and cosmopolitan bonds.

Second, civic solidarity, which is more abstract, is associated with the nation-state, and therefore with particular collective identities. Within legally constituted democratic political orders, citizenship rights (private and public) mediate solidarity. Solidarity develops as strangers, or citizens, discursively address (political public sphere) and resolve (democratic institutions for deliberation and decision making) society wide problems. Civic solidarity cements national societies together. However, globalized networks of exchange and bureaucracy have limited the state's capacity for self-governance and self-determination. Within a postnational world characterized by globalization, nation-states do not have the ability to govern or control everything that happens within their borders. Therefore, a nationally bound political public sphere's ability to monitor and moderate functionally integrating forces is restricted. The new postnational world creates a major democratic deficit within national political orders: limited capacities for legitimation and stability.

And third, cosmopolitan solidarity is a necessary but scarce resource for directing global networks of markets and power. It is weaker than civic solidarity, which, in turn, is less intense than intimate solidarity. The normative framework for a cosmopolitan consciousness is human rights. Cosmopolitan cohesion flows out of a (collective) moral reaction to violations of human rights. On the one hand, human rights and political participation meet the universalizing test for democratic

impartiality and inclusion within a cosmopolitan community of world citizens. Yet, a cosmopolitan political public sphere for shaping opinions and bringing influence into political decision making does not yet exist. On the other hand, the appropriate institutions and cultural ethos must be present in order to effect democratic political decision making. The procedural means for rational political outcomes within global society are also non-existent at present. For global politics to 'catch up' to globalized markets, a democratic institutional framework (legislative body, courts, political public sphere) is necessary.

A peaceful and just global social order is not possible without the initiatives of democratic institutions whose policies and decisions have been influenced and directed by a vibrant and functional global public sphere. Habermas correctly wonders whether the democratic foundation for a legitimate and stable global social order is possible. With globalization and postnationalism, the modern social dynamic is now characterized by a new action 'coordinate system': world domestic policy, global economic networks and global society. The necessary discursive framework – resources, spaces and institutions – which would allow democratic governance over globalized systemic networks are not, as yet, in place.

Ineffectual national political policy and programs can lead to pressure to dismantle the welfare-state compromise and to the development of a social underclass. Segmented and impoverished groups develop when citizens are excluded from education, employment and welfare compensations. Citizens who are unable to use their political rights will not be able to democratically improve or correct their social position; they become voiceless. Consequently, the universalist basis of democratic political legitimacy is eroded through the loss of solidarity. The limits of the nation state become highly visible within segmented political communities: heightened social tensions; increased immiseration; and moral erosion. Without inclusivity, society's moral problem solving capacity is limited.

Obviously the normative resources for radical democratic practices must be cultivated within all political spheres, national and global. Only the inclusive and impartial moral voice of rational consensus can counter democratic legitimization

deficits. Habermas contends we need to take the next abstractive step towards a postnational political order capable of democratic self-steering. Economic markets should not be self-regulating. A peaceful and just global social order, in which lifeworld-system resources are functionally and morally balanced, is only possible through radical democratic practices characterized by egalitarian universalism. The solution Habermas proffers is more tangible, and realistic, than a world government: motivated democratic nation-states; effective conferences and alliances; an empowered United Nations; a robust political public sphere; and so on.

Reaching consensus has been used as a limit case for understanding the possibility for social change within political public sphere and within private sphere – family. According to Habermas' theory of rationalization, reaching agreement has become empirically effective for coordinating social interaction, for meeting everyday needs, and for resolving conflict, at all levels of social relations. Consequently, family has undergone epochal changes, resulting in an increasingly autonomous nuclear family. Ascriptive and traditional ties to kin and to normative expectations have dissolved. The expectation today is that reasonably functional families will be characterized by egalitarian relationships, individuated discursive practices and liberated childrearing practices. Nevertheless, the modern social dynamic generates contradictory experiences for family. On the one hand, individuals have the capacity for coordinating their interactions with others through their own interpretive efforts. On the other hand, systemic needs and requirements can bypass and even distort consensus formation.

Over time, family has lost a number of its traditional responsibilities. Family has become hollowed out, but not emptied out. Traditional self-sufficiency has been transformed into discursive self-realization and pseudo privacy. Instead of creating income, family consumes it, just as it does leisure. Increased private autonomy tends to be measured by a greater capacity for enjoyment and happiness. However, in order to make use of this power to enjoy, this ability to pursue (an ethically defined) happiness, individual family members are dually dependent: upon

employment for wages; and upon private rights to pursue preferences, within marriage for instance.

However, our dependence upon waged labour tends to mask the necessary function family performs for economic markets. Family reproduces labour genealogically and socially. And, family serves as a source of historically situated but moldable needs and demands. Even the political legitimation undergirding democratic orders, which is tied to a public exercise of political rights, can be manipulated. The problem, of course, is systemic deafness to everyday costs: chronic unemployment rates, or inadequate public spaces for open debate and political opinion formation.

From a radical democratic perspective, family's reproductive function can *also* generate competent and motivated individuals who are politically proactive. Our political rights enable a solidaric voice against social inequalities and ineffective (or nonexistent) political policy and programs. On the one hand, we first become discursively proficient and responsible through everyday acts of reaching understanding within family. On the other hand, we also first learn and practice our moral sensibilities within family relationships. Therefore, we first encounter the public in family. Thus, a reasonably functional family plays a central role within a liberal political culture, and within democratic practices and institutions. A discursive approach to the social action – social order – social change dynamic casts familial communicative practices as a foundational and emancipatory experience within Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange model.

Habermas suggests that communicative practices have been unclamped from specific historic contexts, from traditional normative expectations, and from a fixed notion of identity. It is "practically true" (1987c:403), he claims, that communicative sociation within family is coordinated by the reciprocity and symmetry ("logic") necessary for reaching understanding. Everyday conversation is therefore conditioned and expedited by the recursive learning process of reaching understanding and agreement. The primary tasks family fulfills – socialization, identity management, meeting emotional and physical needs – depend upon

successful communicative practices of reaching understanding. The family project stands or falls on basic relations of reciprocity and symmetry.

Since they perform minimal functional specifications (e.g., socialization), modern (western) families can address and meet a wide range of needs and can adapt to new needs and circumstances. Of course family relationships take place in a social space where women and men (and children) have different power differentials, leisure opportunities, and communicative and material resources. Nevertheless, in order for there to be a family project, consensus must be actively sought. And, in order for reasoned agreement to devolve, relations of reciprocity and symmetry must be adequately fulfilled. Thus, the other side of reasoned agreement is interactive competence – the ability to maintain discourse for consensus.

Interactive competence allows participants to pursue a rational outcome in all forms of discourse, ethical (family) or moral (public sphere). A competent speaker is both accountable and open to reasoned consensus. Distorted communicative practices occur when the procedural conditions (egalitarian universalism) for agreement are breached or not sufficiently met. Family solidarity is therefore very sensitive to power differentials and reciprocal exchanges of feelings and emotions (relational reciprocity). The nature of the social space in which familial relations devolve is as important as the public space in which civic and cosmopolitan solidarity are produced.

Habermas uses the public sphere as a yardstick for assessing the civilized (emancipated) nature of a political-legal order. More specifically, he suggests actual discursive practices can be evaluated against the reconstructed social conditions (public spaces for debate) and normative contents (pragmatic presuppositions) necessary for radical democratic practices in modern constitutional democracies. My analysis of the importance of family within Habermas' critical social theory indicates that a similar standard can be used to assess the emancipatory potential within family.

For Habermas, emancipation is an intersubjective learning process through which moral and ethical horizons are extended. Members of family, nation-state or global society must rely on their own normative resources for forging consensual life-projects. Emancipation cannot be administratively forged, economically purchased, or normatively prescribed. It must come from ongoing interpretive accomplishments of participants who wish to cooperatively and consensually coordinate their lives in common. While emancipation make us more independent, it does not automatically bring happiness. Family's structural transformation has generated relational and socialization practices and conditions which are liberating, demanding and fragile. Everyday discursive practices of reaching understanding are foundational for social change within family.

A Habermasian framework therefore points to a number of empirical referents which characterize emancipating discursive practices within family. Using several of these indicators (talk together, laugh together, happiness with partner) a scale of discursive concordance was created. Through logistic regression analysis of Canadian secondary data, a profile was developed of families which engaged in concordant discursive practices, as opposed to those which do not. Concordance is an empirical representation of democratic discourse and its pragmatic presuppositions. The potential for emancipation (for self-determination) within family depends upon the learning potential of an ethically embedded discursively concordant practice of reaching understanding.

The analysis of concordant familial relationships within Canada reflects an ongoing struggle to realize a consensual joint life-project. A tension concerning women's gender roles highlights this struggle. Predictors for having a concordant relationship include: being a woman as opposed to a man; having better health and less stress, holding traditional values concerning family, and being satisfied with work/family/home balance. Considering the interconnectedness of family with larger social structures, the policy implications of these results warrant further indepth study.

Using a Habermasian theoretical framework for discursively examining the social action – social order – social change dynamic of modern societies emphasizes the emancipatory potential which inheres within our everyday communicative practices. Since the modern social dynamic within which we learn, love, play and work is far from ideal, the sensitivity of Habermas' social theory to both solidarity and justice can only enrich and strengthen the sociological perspective. The following observations underscore the significance of a Habermasian approach to Sociology's central themes.

5.3 OBSERVATIONS

Habermas believes that we can achieve "friendly" (2004b:4) forms of coexistence through the normative resources available within our everyday discursive practices. Ordinary language has a productive capacity for forging a democratic, egalitarian and just form of life. As we coordinate our interactions through our own interpretive accomplishments – through reaching consensus – the rational potential of language is released. Cooperatively and consensually establishing and coordinating interaction requires "relations of mutual recognition, mutual role-taking, a shared willingness to consider one's own tradition with the eyes of a stranger and to learn from one another" (2001c:129). Even democratic discursive practices within family require an "elemental normativity" expressed through relations of reciprocity and symmetry (1999:448). A basic premise of Habermas' discourse theory is that there are no "definite" obstacles to "egalitarian interpersonal relations" (2003b:63). Since our interests, needs and problems are bound up with those of everyone else, since we live in a multicultural, multifaith, global society, and since globalized economic networks have become a pacemaker for social modernization, the central moral-practical dilemma within contemporary social life is to establish a peaceful, legitimate and just coexistence.

Historical "empires" and modern nation-states, Habermas points out, have only one appearance within world history. Europe, however, as a collection of developed societies, now has a "second chance" (1996b:507) to bring peaceful coexistence to the global stage. The second opportunity to civilize global society

(1997:92;181) cannot be achieved through “old-style power politics”. Emancipated forms of life can only be realized through “democratization processes” (e.g., radical democracy) (1996b:372). Therefore, friendly forms of coexistence are only possible through “the changed premises of a nonimperialist process of reaching understanding with, and learning from, other cultures” (1996b:507).

Moral learning processes occur within our discursive problem solving practices: as we cope with dissonant value orientations; as we confront shared life-risks; as we struggle with our mistakes; as we strive to meet our needs; and as we fashion our individual and collective life-projects. A central premise within the analysis of the action – order – change dynamic has been that learning processes embody an emancipatory potential. One useful strategy for assessing this learning potential is to examine the solidarization – desolidarization problematic which defines the balance of resources within Habermas’ lifeworld-system interchange. Although the frame of reference differs, the desolidarization problematic occurs within all levels of social complexity: cosmopolitan, national and familial.

A cosmopolitan solidarity which bonds world citizens together is “reactive” in nature. Solidarity coalesces around “feelings of indignation” regarding human rights violations, such as state repression of basic human rights. Civic solidarity, by contrast, has an “active” character (2001c:108). Unlike citizens of global society whose common reference point is “complete inclusion”, citizens of nation-states have an “ethical-political self-understanding” through which they develop their bounded collective identity. Regulating their common social life is self-referenced against their shared goals, historical traditions and established patterns of social organization (2001c:107). Action coordination practices in family also have a predominant existential and ethical substratum.

As we shift from cosmopolitan to civic to intimate solidarity, discursive practices thicken. Solidarity within lifeworld contexts such as family flows out of common mutual understanding and shared norms and values (2001c:82). Typically, intimate relationships are characterized by: strong convictions (e.g., values and norms); intense emotions (e.g., love); existential needs and concerns (e.g.,

education, employment); and common life-plans (e.g., children, retirement). Habermas refers to the solidarity characteristic of “personal relationships” within “concrete” communities (e.g., family, friendships) as the basis from which more abstract forms (e.g., civic solidarity) develop (2001c:64, 152-154). Family is where we first develop our communicative competence, form and manage our identities, learn the moral fabric of life, and acquire and practice our convictions and preferences.

The rational potential of everyday communicative sociation points to family both as a social space for emancipated relationships and as a social mechanism for enabling emancipatory impulses societally and globally. As is the case for citizens within the public sphere, the convictions and cooperation necessary for reaching understanding, for establishing common life-goals, and for collectively pursuing those goals, depends upon a discursively produced solidarity. However, when either family members, groups of citizens, or masses of people (global society) are isolated from, and cannot make effective use of, their political rights for democratically addressing common issues and needs, desolidarization becomes a problem. Exclusion brings desolidarization. It damages solidarity’s normative foundation. And when politics (national or global) loses the ability to “shape social relations” normatively (2001c:78-79), it loses its moral compass.

At the more abstractive level of cosmopolitan solidarity, exclusion relates directly to the capacity of citizens to develop a cosmopolitan consciousness. Citizens must be able to “pressure” their respective governing bodies (and “elites”) to become responsible participants within a globalized discourse aimed at peaceful coexistence (2001c:55-56). Governing elites must learn that it is in their best interests to be willing participants in globalized discursive practices. The minimum standard for democratic global governance is the participation of a global citizenry.

At present, the absence of appropriate cosmopolitan democratic structures creates “legitimation gaps”. As important as they are, existing structures such as the United Nations, ongoing conferences and workshops, and non-governmental organizations (2001c:71), cannot bridge the gap. Habermas identifies “the

asymmetrical interdependencies between developed nations, newly industrialized nations, and the less developed nations” as another very important source of cosmopolitan exclusion contributing to the dearth of “global governance” (2001c:54). Until and unless the democratic legitimation gap is resolved, moral-practical solutions to global issues will be in short supply.

Modern nation-states are situated within a postnational constellation. Postnationalism refers to the inability of national democratic practices to address and mitigate, let alone resolve, contemporary political problems. If national politics is to fulfill its functions within the boundaries of the nation-state (regulating social interactions, fostering solidarity and resolving society wide problems), then globalization poses a serious challenge to a democratic society’s capacity for effective “reflective intervention”. To illustrate his point, Habermas argues that democratic self-determination has been limited to internal practices of “forced adaptation” (2001c:60-61) to global economic pressures, a political condition which is evidenced by the dismantling of the welfare-state compromise, and the acceptance of “high” and “permanent” unemployment rates (1997:179; 2001c:50).

Globalized economic competition and expansion forces national governments to adopt political policies and practices which improve “the relative attractiveness of their local position”, or the local conditions for economic activity (2001c:105; 61; also 1998a:124). National governments do not have the capacity for “macro-steering” a globalized economy (2001c:105 ; 1997:179). Coupled with issues such as weapons trade, terrorism, ecological degradation, and pervasive communication technologies, these problems clearly demonstrate the limits of a self-centered national politics. Nation-state sovereignty has been hollowed out (1997:168, 141).

One limiting effect of the new postnational constellation is the “narrowed horizons” available for “externalizing” the effects of adaptive political decisions (e.g., “affluent societies’ production of toxic waste”) onto other regions or countries, the environment, or the working poor, without magnifying already intensified “social

costs” (2001c:55). The problem, Habermas suggests, is the absence of a cosmopolitan solidarity capable of world domestic policy (2001c:56). He writes:

A world order and a world economic order that are more peaceful and more just are unimaginable without international institutions capable of action, and especially without voting procedures, among regional regimes currently caught up in development, in the framework and under the pressure of a worldwide, mobile civil society. (1997:178-179)

Habermas identifies three consequences of desolidarization: increased social tension, revolt and state repression; intensive and extensive social and physical impoverishment; and a “moral erosion of society” (1998a:123). Repression continues isolation. Increasing social and economic deprivation aggravates and extends exclusion. And moral erosion – the attenuation and abrogation of the universalization standard (e.g., inclusivity, impartiality) necessary for consensual agreements (1998a:123) – permits economic expansion and infiltration to continue unmonitored and unabated.

Just as moral erosion signals the limits of radical democracy, “unsolved global problems” disclose the “limits of the nation-state” (1997:180). The following quotation from an interview with Habermas provides a summary explanation of the solidarization – desolidarization problematic: “Majority decisions achieved in a formally correct manner, but which reflect only the status-anxieties and self-assertive reflexes of a middle class threatened with decline, undermine the legitimacy of the procedures and institutions of the constitutional state and of democracy” (1997:180).

Moreover, Habermas suggests desolidarization can be avoided, or solidarization established and stabilized, through the “results” of democratic politics. These results can be measured by “recognized standards of social justice”: for example, the development of social policies encompassing economic redistribution (material equality), the provision of health care and education; and the protection of cultural heritage and the environment (2001c:76-77). The regulative power of rationalized and globalized markets (e.g., success, egocentrism, personal preference) cannot produce democratic results – social justice. Without social

justice, legitimacy and solidarity have limited political effect. Obviously, civic desolidarization is highly interconnected to global issues.

The solidarization-desolidarization problematic plays out a little differently within family (and friendships), though with similar consequences. Where the common life-project of world citizens is friendly forms of coexistence, for family members it is an egalitarian and cooperative common life-project which often centers on raising children. On the one hand, when groups of citizens are excluded from democratic practices of self-determination, the capacity for morally regulating social life is jeopardized. On the other hand, when an adult family member is excluded from democratic discourse, the ethical basis for a common life-project is at risk. In both cases, the rational potential for reaching understanding and for consensual action coordination is limited. And, solidarity becomes problematic.

Habermas argued that family cohesiveness is threatened by power relations, by problems of need satisfaction and by conflict (Fultner, 2002). Furthermore, these conditions are interdependent and can be intergenerationally transferred (2001b:169-170). An imbalance of power between wives and husbands can lead to relational asymmetries manifested by unmet needs and gratifications. The greater the power imbalance, the greater the potential for conflict. Ultimately, identity management becomes tenuous when power, need satisfaction and conflict restrict and distort discursive problem solving practices. Habermas, for example, suggests that problems with the external organization of speech (e.g., relational symmetry and reciprocity) may lead to a distortion of the internal organization of speech (e.g., ideal presuppositions). When the normative presuppositions for reaching consensus discursively (e.g., openness to everyone, equal consideration of all contributions, freedom from coercion, openness to the better argument) are not sufficiently met, the consensual basis for discursively coordinating a family life-project and for resolving problems becomes fragile. Consequently, solidarity becomes threatened if not scarce.

Within Habermas' lifeworld-system interchange model, family is a social space where functional and social imperatives coexist and collide, often intensely.

On the one hand, family relationships must be coordinated communicatively, through reaching understanding. On the other hand, there is no safe haven from functional requisites of money and bureaucratic power. Survival needs for food, shelter and clothing demand both participation within the (globalized) economic market place and access to state sponsored and administered services. Systemic unemployment may require individuals to become clients of the welfare state, to make employment insurance claims, or to seek public (or private) financial aid. Divorce may force a single mother with children to become a welfare recipient.

As employees and as clients, citizens' autonomy and responsibility for social integration become subject to non-discursive imperatives. When action coordinating practices are no longer oriented toward reaching understanding about what is good for us, as a family, discursive problem solving loses its ethical base. If left unmonitored and unabated, the strategic orientation to interaction demanded by system imperatives can have exclusionary effects. They can lead to desolidarization.

Gender relationships within family are another possible source of desolidarization. Habermas understands both gender relations and gender identity as historically changing "social constructions" (1996b:425). They reflect very "elementary layers" of self-understanding which need to be open to "public discussion" (1996b:425-426), and therefore to debate and change. He underscores the need for redressing the inequalities between women and men by pointing to the "feminization of poverty". "[M]odernization losses", he points out, have far more serious consequences for women (and children) than for men (1996b:422). Although his primary concern is with emancipation within more complex social formations (e.g., radical democracy, political public sphere), the gendered layering of relationships, of identity and of material consequences within family has an existential immediacy and intensity.

On the one hand, family is the primary social location in which our needs are met and our identities are shaped. Moreover, we learn the moral fabric of life within our everyday interactions, and especially within family (e.g., 1993:114; 1997:73, 86).

For instance, we learn to see ourselves and others as equally vulnerable. On the other hand, familial interactions are subject to systemic imperatives, ego-centric power struggles, patriarchal assumptions and gendered layering (e.g., 2003b:110; 2001b:165; 1996b:425-426). Decision making processes are bound up with pragmatic preferences and ethical (provincial) concerns. Family, therefore, should be understood as a primary social location for discursively *addressing* and *resolving* issues concerning gender, solidarity and emancipation.

Family is an everyday proving ground for the development of relational symmetries and reciprocities necessary for both ethical and moral insight. The consensual basis for establishing a common, cooperative life-project requires family members to practice “mutual respect and solidaristic responsibility” – universal egalitarianism (e.g., 1998a:34). In fact, Habermas argues that equal respect and solidarity with others – “the mark of humanity” – is first tested within the autonomous choices we make concerning our personal life-histories and our concrete forms of life (1993:15). If not first in family, in what? When referring to the discursive learning process underlying moral universalism, Habermas suggests we must learn from the pain and suffering of those who have been excluded, including “domesticated women” (1993:15).

Growing up in a halfway functional family provides us with the normative resources – communicative competence, moral sensitivities and motivations – necessary for discursively resolving problems and coordinating actions, within family and within the public sphere. Also, everyday life-experience becomes an “antennae” for detecting social problems (e.g., unemployment). Individuals then bring their concerns and needs into the public sphere where they are critically debated. Although discursively differentiated by their privacy and publicity, the “threshold” (1996b:365) separating family and the public sphere is actually quite porous.

A Habermasian framework for understanding family life highlights both opportunities and limitations for emancipation, for constructing and maintaining a better form of life. We have the discursive resources for generating new social

forms. Lifeworld rationalization has loosened the rational potential of everyday discursive practices from traditional normative and ascriptive ties. Individuals have responsibility for coordinating interactions through their own interpretive accomplishments. And, as long as social conditions facilitate inclusivity and respect, the productive capacity of everyday communicative practices can both generate and regenerate solidary relations democratically.

Since, in principle, all relationships are contestable, all dependencies on others are reversible (2003b:61, 63). Thus, discursive problem solving can lead to the development of an emancipated family form. An emancipatory struggle for a better way of life requires a discursive learning process in which responsible and autonomous (e.g., reciprocal interdependence and socialized individuation) participants consensually reach understanding and coordinate subsequent plans of action. Even in family, emancipated relationships are only possible through solidary practices founded upon democratic discourse. The internal relation between solidarity and justice allows the voice of reason to speak within family as well as within a global public sphere.

Herein lies the strength of a communicative perspective. It focuses upon the discursive social dynamic within which everyone lives and through which everyone must work out their life-experiences reflectively, intersubjectively and cooperatively. Furthermore, it emphasizes the everyday importance of peacefully, democratically and discursively meeting needs and establishing and achieving goals (social action), of regulating and integrating social co-existence (social order), and of resolving problems (social change). It emphasizes, therefore, an ongoing discursive learning process within which solidarity and justice are foundational, within families, friendships, communities, national societies, as well as global society.

5.4 CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

I believe that the relevance of a communicative perspective for Sociology should be measured by its explanatory power, by its empirical fruitfulness, and, although more controversial, by its motivating or action orienting potential. My research has been guided by these three premises. Both the theoretical analysis

of communicative sociation (action), solidarity (order) and emancipation (change) *and* the study of concordant communicative relationships within Canadian families offer prima facie support for using a Habermasian theoretical framework.

First, the analysis of how we discursively link up our interactions with one another, of how we consensually produce, maintain and reconstruct social order, and of how we communicatively engage social change demonstrate the importance of a Habermasian theoretical framework for understanding the action – order – change social dynamic. If we communicate to sociate, and if we sociate to navigate, then the implication for Sociology seems clear. In order to account for intersubjectivity (for social interaction), in all of its changing, ambiguous and dimensional complexity, a sociological perspective must be oriented to democratic communicative sociation, to reaching understanding and agreement through reasoned consensus. A democratic communicative practice engenders, structures, supports and transforms social interaction.

I have argued that using communicative sociation to understand and critique the modern social dynamic reveals the fertile but fragile nature of the inner relation between Sociology's focal themes, between solidarity and justice, between moral and ethical decision making and between social and functional mechanisms for coordinating interactions. A communicative approach emphasizes the interdependence of solidarity and justice for all forms of interactive concordance, including family. Thus, very importantly, I believe a communicative sociological approach points to the nature of intersubjectivity – the relational structure – which underlies our action coordinating practices. The relational structures within our solidary relationships are foundational for achieving the kind of social change we value.

Within a Habermasian conceptual framework, these relational structures emphasize the importance of a democratic relational dynamic which can be characterized as an "intact" or "unimpaired" intersubjectivity (1992b:145; 1997:143; 1989-90:46). Equal respect and mutual reciprocity are necessary for establishing cooperative, peaceful and friendly forms of coexistence. Ultimately, our capacity for

moral and ethical learning, for changing and improving our normative practices and structures, depends upon the nature of our intersubjectivity. After all, if the heart of Sociology is to be found in social interaction, then the soul of Sociology is located at the center of the social dynamic, at the intersection of action, order and change – within communicative sociation. A communicative approach maintains an internal connection with the real world in all of its changing complexity.

Second, the rational potential for communicatively organizing social life was developed within two social contexts: the political public sphere, and family. They both bear a heavy burden of proof regarding their contribution to an emancipatory potential within modern social life. Although Habermas believes that opportunities for rational (reasoned) action need to be opened within both public and private (family) social spaces, he focuses his attention upon the former. I have been concerned with complementing Habermas' theoretical framework by extending it to family, conceptually and empirically. Habermas' conceptual framework provided several empirical referents which characterized democratic discursive practices. In turn, these referents were used to develop a profile of Canadian married couples who engaged in democratic discursive practices, who reflected a discursively concordant relationship.

Discursive concordance means these Canadian couples appear to have sufficiently fulfilled the requisite pragmatic presuppositions for reaching agreement. Thus concordance also means that their relational structures were sufficiently intact; they were characterized by solidarity and justice, by mutual reciprocity and equal respect. Obviously, further in-depth study of family is warranted, in terms of the potential for establishing discursively concordant relationships and for the requisite intact intersubjectivity (e.g., solidarity and justice), and in regards to the relevance of family as a mediating institution. Along with social critics such as Bellah (1985; 2006), we need to study how family contributes to a liberal political culture (e.g., competencies and capacities, topics and problems, meanings and interpretations) undergirding modern democratic polities. In spite of family's changing structure, these relational interdependencies are our first formative public.

In regards to the third premise, given the conditions of social modernization and the problems and risks of desolidarization, we cannot not respond to nor learn from the social costs of issues such as moral apathy. We cannot afford to be morally indifferent to the pain and suffering of others. Indifference or non-action will lead to outcomes over which we may have little influence or control. Discursively and impartially forging our moral compass will enable us to navigate the solidarization-desolidarization problematic – even in family – and to give direction to the lifeworld-system interchange within the modern social dynamic. If we are interested in establishing a better way of life for ourselves, and for our children, then as responsible and morally sensitive members of (any) society, we must take up the navigational task of living within modern pluralistic life-forms. This task is significant and demanding because these life-forms are not only heavily influenced and structured, if not colonized, by globalized networks of money and power, but are themselves challenged by increasingly generalized and globalized risks such as global warming and terrorism.

Two other related issues of interest require a final and general comment: one has to do with the problem of societal integration and differentiation; the other involves democratic proceduralism. Both will be discussed conjointly and briefly in relation to the relevance and importance of religion and faith communities within modern, western democratic states. Habermas (2006) has recently discussed, in post-metaphysically agnostic (“but non-reductionist”) terms, the continuing and irreplaceable relevance of religious “traditions and communities of faith” within secular, democratic, constitutional states (2006:1,16). For many, religion is a vital source of meaning and motivation for everyday life. And, according to Habermas, it should remain so.

Religion, through its active involvement within the political public sphere, has an unique potential for identifying sources and problems of oppression and vulnerability (2006:10), and for cultivating a “post-secular self-understanding of society” (2005:26). More generally, religion has “a semantic potential” (2006:17) which, when translated into a universal (secular) language everyone can

understand, can be an invaluable resource for meaning and direction (action) within discursive opinion- and will-formation practices constitutive of democratic deliberative processes. Within an impartial and secular democratic state, democratic procedure means that both religious citizens and secular citizens (should) participate on an equal footing, and that rational outcomes are possible through open and fair deliberative practices (e.g., political public sphere) (2006:4,5,12). Polyphony, or the “polyphonic complexity of public voices” (2006:10), is both the challenge and the strength of democratic harmonization. By extension, the same holds for family.

Thus, Habermas emphasizes the central importance of translating practices – of translating beliefs and convictions into a common (secular) language – and of learning processes for generating and maintaining a legitimate democratic order, for coordinating and integrating social life within modern, pluralistic, constitutional democracies. Socio-cultural learning occurs when all citizens, religious and secular, adopt a self-reflective (e.g., decentering) approach to issues of social order and problem solving: religious citizens toward their beliefs and convictions as being semantically expressible (e.g., translatable) and understandable to everyone; and secular citizens toward their own secular understanding of modern socio-political life as being fallible and open to change, and toward religion as potentially offering new meaning, “new normative truth content” (2006:10,15). In other words, all citizens within a democratic society “owe one another good reasons for their political statements and attitudes” and therefore must depend upon “cooperative acts of translation” (2006: 11). When irreconcilable differences arise, politicians assume the burden (the “strict demand”) of neutrality for resolving problems deliberatively and legitimately (2006:8,9), if and until the need for further justification or problems of application arise.

However, Habermas argues that religious citizens should not be expected or required to abandon their belief system as a “seat” of their everyday lives. They should not have to be of two minds, or to split their identity between private and public selves (2006:7,8,9-10). The “melting pot of rational discourse” (2006:17) –

for the legitimate and rational outcomes necessary for coordinating and integrating complex formations of social life – should not reduce or limit the meaning structures around which and through which everyday life is experienced and constructed or reconstructed. Yet in a world of competing worldviews, “only secular reasons count” (e.g., neutrality), or should count, in the formal institutional complex (“parliaments, courts, ministries and administrations”) beyond the “informal public sphere” (2006:9). Polyphonic harmonization through normative agreement based on a common (secular) language requires only epistemic acceptance.

According to Habermas, modern Western (democratic) political communities, which are characterized by private and public rights, religious pluralism, constitutional separation of the church and state and democratically legitimate outcomes, require the mediating effects of a civic solidarity grounded in a legitimating and deliberative democratic proceduralism. Democratic proceduralism, with its emphasis upon right (moral concerns) over good (ethical concerns), involves the “reciprocity of expectations” which can bridge competing and possibly unresolvable worldviews (2006:13). Any problems of social integration emanating from differentiation (e.g., from competing religious worldviews) can be resolved politically only when all those affected (e.g., citizens of a bounded political community) see themselves as “free and equal participants” within any socially regulating and problem solving political practices (2006:13). Even interfaith dialogue oriented toward greater understanding, let alone cooperative engagements for peaceful coexistence, is premised on sufficiently fulfilling everyday assumptions necessary for reaching agreement. At a minimum, there is an implicit acceptance of procedural conditions. Both informally and formally, procedural elements are foundational for cooperative and fair deliberative practices. Within pluralistic societies, how else but through (democratic) deliberative proceduralism can we peacefully and cooperatively coordinate, regulate and integrate our interactions with others fairly and legitimately?

Consequently, without “political integration” being subject to the “yardstick” of deliberative democracy through the “public use of reason” (2006:18), the risk of

fragmentation and desolidarization looms large. Consensus formation through constitutionally guaranteed principles (e.g., neutrality, deliberation) has the capacity to contain, but not necessarily always to resolve, conflict between competing “existential values” (2006:12). Conflicts such as abortion remain open challenges to the solidaric basis of a political community oriented to the well-being of all members. Notwithstanding these continuing and contentious issues, for Habermas, there is (as yet) no alternative, no functional equivalent, to democratic practices of problem solving, especially the practice of radical democracy.

Certainly, neutrality and deliberation are two core conditions necessary for establishing friendly and fair co-relations, within and between faith communities, and within and between politically bounded societies. The procedural element (e.g., presuppositions, conditions and practices) of a democratic politics oriented toward legitimate outcomes, and therefore (at least) capable of societal problem solving, embodies the normative expectation that there is an alternative to conflict and coercion, or even separation. In fact, socio-cultural learning assumes participants within problem solving engagements achieve a sufficiently overlapping lifeworld background consensus. In open dialogue, participants come with their beliefs, expectations and motivations in hand. In impartial dialogue, participants seek to achieve an acceptable – to everyone – yet temporal and conditional consensual understanding or agreement. Embeddedness (e.g., differing interests, needs, attachments and commitments, and values and beliefs) is the basis for and the problem of democratic discursive practices, be they practically, ethically or morally centered, or be they informal or institutionalized. Obviously, the pragmatic demands and conditions for achieving understanding or agreement vary with the transition from family and friendships, to community and faith groups, to nation state, to global society.

Social contexts such as those within civil society – our families, our friendships, our faith communities – constitute “thick contexts” (2005:17) of interaction. They involve everyday intersubjective structures which are, for example, highly interdependent, often habitual and intensely emotional in nature. As

individuals, we grow into an “intersubjectively shared universe of meanings and practices” through socialization (2005:17), especially within family. On the one hand, socialization generates persons with distinct identities. Socialization shapes, shifts and secures identities. On the other hand, identities are embedded within cultural traditions which enable (“elemental”) basic intersubjective competencies: “capacities for speaking, acting and knowing” (2005:22). Accordingly, family, and therefore the discursive nature of family solidarity, is foundational.

In conclusion, analytically, the other side of consensus and concordance is dissensus and discordance. Life-experience, however, does not take place at the end points of an analytic spectrum. Everyday life-experiences range in the gray area between these limit cases (end points), where the ebb and flow of power relationships, unmet needs, and material inequalities limit and distort the emancipatory potential which inheres within everyday communicative practices. The central challenge confronting modern social orders in the new millennium is the ongoing need for establishing and maintaining concordant relationships with both proximal and distal others. Thus our communicative problem solving capacities have become a measure of the rational potential for establishing friendly forms of coexistence, and for negotiating social change, at all levels of social complexity, from society to family.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agresti, Alan
2002 *Categorical Data Analysis*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Benhabib, Seyla,
1986 *Critique, Norm, and Utopia: A Study of the Foundations fo Critical Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Bernstein, Richard J.
1976 "The Critical Theory of Society." In *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*. Pp. 173-236. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Bohman, James.
1996 *Public Deliberation: Pluralism, Complexity, and Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Braaten, Jane.
1991 *Habermas's Critical Theory of Society*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Brand, Arie.
1990 *The Force of Reason: An Introduction to Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action*. Boston: Allen & Unwin.
- Chambers, Simone.
1996 *Reasonable Democracy: Jurgen Habermas and the Politics of Discourse*. Ithica: Cornell University Press.
- Chatterjee, Samprit; Ali S. Hadi and Bertram Price.
2000 *Regression Analysis by Example*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Cooke, Maeve.
1998 "Introduction." In *On the Pragmatics of Communication*. Maeve Cooke, editor. Pp. 1-19. Cambridge, Massachussetts: The MIT Press.
- 1994 *Language and Reason: A Study of Habermas's Pragmatics*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

- Cronin, Ciaran and Pablo De Greiff, editors.
 1998 "Editors' Introduction." In *Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*. Pp. vii-xxxii. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- de Vaus, David
 2002 *Analyzing Social Science Data: 50 Key Problems in Data Analysis*. Thousand Oakes: Sage Publications.
- Fultner, Barbara.
 2003 "Translator's Introduction." In *Truth and Justification*. Translated by Barbara Fultner. Pp. vii-xxii. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- George, Darren and Paul Mallery.
 2001 *SPSS For Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference. 10.0 Update*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Habermas, Jurgen.
 2006 "Religion in the Public Sphere." *European Journal of Philosophy*. Translated by Jeffrey Gaines. 14(1): 1-25.
- 2005 "Equal Treatment of Cultures and the Limits of Postmodern Liberalism." *The Journal of Political Philosophy*. Translated by Jeffrey Flynn. 13(1): 1-28.
- 2004a "The Moral and the Ethical: A Reconsideration of the Issue of the Priority of the Right over the Good". In *Pragmatism, Critique, Judgement: Essays for Richard J. Bernstein*. Seyla Benhabib and Nancy Fraser, editors. Pp. 29-43. Article translated in part by William Rehg. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 2004b "Public Space and Political Public Sphere - The Biographical Roots of Two Motifs in My Thought". Commemorative Lecture. 2004 Kyoto Prize for Arts and Philosophy: Thought and Ethics. November 11, 2004. Kyoto, Japan.
- 2003a "A Dialogue with Jurgen Habermas." In *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*. Translated by Luis Guzman and revised by Jurgen Habermas. Pp. 25-43. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- 2003b *The Future of Human Nature*. Translated by William Rehg (Chapter 1), Max Pensky (Forward and Postscript to Chapter 2), and Hella Beister and Max Pensky (Chapter 2, 3). Malden, MA: Polity Press/Blackwell Publishing.
- 2003c "Toward a Cosmopolitan Europe." *Journal of Democracy*. Translated by Max Pensky. 14(4): 86-100.
- 2003d *Truth and Justification*. Edited and Translated by Barbara Fultner. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 2002a "A Conversation About God and the World: An Interview with Eduardo Mendieta." In *Religion and Rationality: Essays on Reason, God and Modernity*. Pp. 147-167. Translated by Max Pensky. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 2002b *Religion and Rationality: Essays on Reason, God and Modernity*. Translated by Max Pensky (Introduction, Chapters 2, 8), Frederick G. Lawrence (Chapter 1), Eric Crump and Peter P. Kenny (Chapter 3), Ciaran P. Cronin (Chapter 4), Peter Dews (Chapters 5, 6, 7). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 2001a "Forward." In *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*. Translated by Max Pensky. Pp. xviii-xix. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 2001b *On the Pragmatics of Social Interaction: Preliminary Studies in the Theory of Communicative Action*. Translated by Barbara Fultner. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 2001c *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*. Translated by Max Pensky. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 2001d "Why Europe Needs a Constitution." *New Left Review*. 11:5-26.
- 2000a "Globalism, Ideology and Traditions: Interview with Jurgen Habermas." *Thesis Eleven*. 63:1-10.
- 2000b "Remarks on Erhard Denninger's Triad of Diversity, Security, and Solidarity." In *Constellations*. Translated by Christopher Long and William E. Scheuerman. 7(4):522-528.

- 1999 "A Short Reply." In *Ratio Juris*. 12(4):445-453.
- 1998a *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*. Edited by Ciaran Cronin and Pablo De Greiff. Translated by Ciaran Cronin. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1998b "Learning by Disaster? A Diagnostic Look Back on the Short 20th Century." *Constellations*. 5(3): 307-320.
- 1998c *On the Pragmatics of Communication*. Translated by Maeve Cooke. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- 1998d "Reply to Symposium Participants, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law." In *Habermas on Law and Democracy: Critical Exchanges*. Michael Rosenfeld and Andrew Arato, editors. Translated by William Rehg. Pp. 381-452. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- 1997 *A Berlin Republic: Writings on Germany*. Translated by Steven Rendall. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- 1996a "An Interview With Jurgen Habermas." *Theory, Culture and Society*. Translated by J. Bleicher. 13(3):1-17.
- 1996b *Between Facts and Norms*. Translated by William Rehg. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- 1996c "Paradigms of Law". *Habermas on Law and Democracy: Critical Exchanges*. Edited by Michel Rosenfeld and Andrew Arato. Translated by William Rehg. Pp. 13-25. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 1996d "Popular Sovereignty as Procedure (1988)." In *Between Facts and Norms*. Translated by William Rehg. Pp. 463-490. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- 1996e "Preface." In *Between Facts and Norms*. Translated by William Rehg. Pp. xxxix-xliii. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- 1994a "Overcoming the Past." *New Left Review*. 203: 3-16.

- 1994b *The Past as Future*. Translated by Max Pensky. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
- 1993 *Justification and Application: Remarks on Discourse Ethics*. Translated by Ciaran Cronin. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- 1992a "Further Reflections on the Public Sphere." In *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Craig Calhoun, editor. Translated by Thomas Burger. Pp. 421-461. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1992b *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays*. Translated by William Mark Hohengarten. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1991a "A Reply." in *Communicative Action: Essays on Jurgen Habermas's The Theory of Communicative Action*. Axel Honneth and Hans Joas, editors. Translated by Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones. Pp.214-264. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1991b *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Translated by Thomas Burger, with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- 1991c "What Does Socialism Mean Today? The Revolutions of Recuperation and the Need for New Thinking." In *After the Fall: The Failure of Communism and the Future of Socialism*. Robin Blackburn, editor. Translated by Ben Morgan, 1990. Pp. 25-46. New York: Verso.
- 1991d "Why Europe Needs a Constitution." *New Left Review*. 11:5-26.
- 1990 *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*. Translated by Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholsen. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1989-90 "Justice and Solidarity: On the Discussion Concerning 'Stage 6'." *The Philosophical Forum*. 21(1-2): 32-52.

- 1989a "The Crisis of the Welfare State and the Exhaustion of Utopian Energies". In *Jurgen Habermas on Society and Politics: A Reader*. Steven Seidman, editor. Translated by Shierry Weber NicholSEN. pp. 284-299. Boston: Beacon Press.
- 1989b *The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism and the Historian's Debate*. Translated and edited by Shierry Weber NicholSEN. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1988-89 "Morality and Ethical Life: Does Hegel's Critique of Kant Apply to Discourse Ethics?" *Northwestern University Law Review*. 83(1,2):38-53.
- 1987a *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*. Translated by Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1987b "Preface." in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*. Translated by Frederick Lawrence. pp. xix-xx. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1987c *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. 2. Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press.
- 1985a "A Philosophico-Political Profile." *New Left Review*. 151: 75-105.
- 1985b "Questions and Counterquestions". In *Habermas and Modernity*. Edited by Richard J. Bernstein. Translated by James Bohman. Pp. 192-216. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1985c "Remarks on the Concept of Communicative Action". in *Social Action*. Gottfried Seebass and Raimo Tuomela, editors. Translated by Ruth Stanley. pp. 151-178. Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- 1984a "Civil Disobedience: Litmus Test for the Democratic Constitutional State." *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*. Introduction and Translation by John Torpey. 30:95-116.

- 1984b *The Theory of Communicative Action. Vol. 1. Reason and the Rationalization of Society.* Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press.
- 1983 "Remarks on the Concept of Communicative Action." In *Social Action*. Edited by Gottfried Seebass and Raimo Tuomela. Pp. 151-178. Boston: D. Reidel Publishing.
- 1982 "A Reply to My Critics." In *Habermas: Critical Debates*. John B. Thompson and David Held, editors. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Pp. 219-283. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- 1979a *Communication and the Evolution of Society.* Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press.
- 1979b "History and Evolution." *Telos*. Spring. 39:5-44.
- 1975 *Legitimation Crisis.* Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press.
- 1973 *Theory and Practice.* Translated by John Viertel. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Hosmer, David W. And Stanley Lemeshow.
2000 *Applied Logistic Regression.* New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Matustik, Martin Beck.
2001 *Jurgen Habermas: A Philosophical-Political Profile.* New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- McCarthy, Thomas.
1975 "Translator's Introduction." in *Legitimation Crisis*. Jurgen Habermas. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. pp. vii-xxiv. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Menard, Scott
2002 *Applied Logistic Regression Analysis.* Thousand Oakes: Sage.
- Norusis, Marija J.
2003 *SPSS 12.0 Statistical Procedures Companion.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Owen, David S.

2002 *Between Reason and History: Habermas and the Idea of Progress.*
Albany: State University of New York Press.

Pampel, Fred C.

2000 *Logistic Regression: A Primer.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Rehg, William.

1996 "Translator's Introduction." In *Between Facts and Norms.* By
Jurgen Habermas. Pp. ix-xxxvii. Cambridge, MA: Press.

Statistics Canada.

1995 *General Social Survey of Canada. Cycle 10: Family.* Internet Data
Library System.

Tabachnick, Barbara G. And Linda S. Fidell.

2001 *Using Multivariate Statistics.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

White, Stephen K.

1989 *The Recent Work of Jurgen Habermas: Reason, Justice and
Modernity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wright, Raymond E.

1995 "Logistic Regression." In *Reading and Understanding Multivariate
Statistics.* Laurence G. Grimm and Paul R. Yarnold, editors. Pp.
217-244. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.